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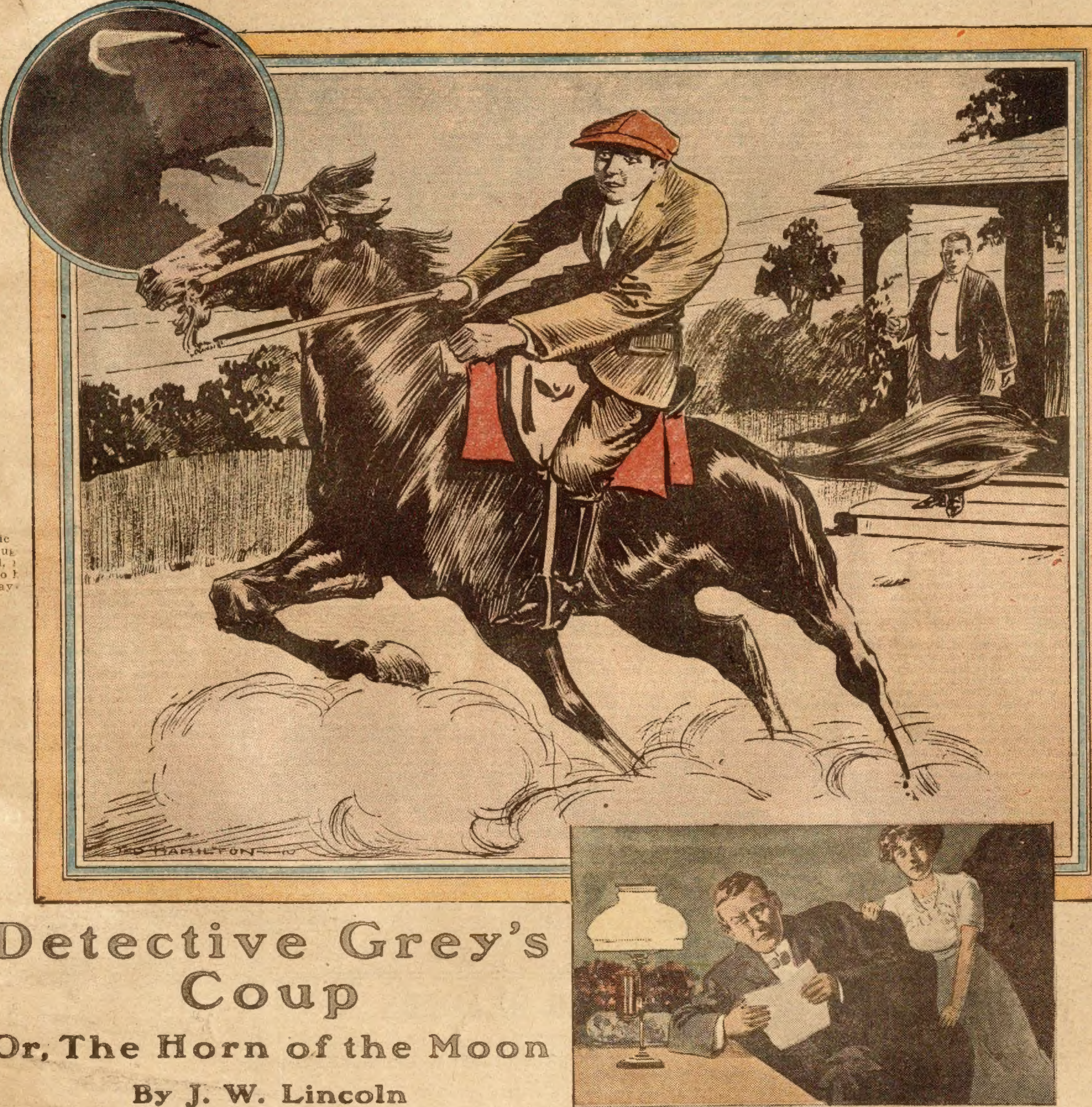

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Detective Grey's Coup

Or, The Horn of the Moon

By J. W. Lincoln

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CHAPTER I.

HUMPHREY GREY scowled. Before him on his desk lay two letters. Said one:

"Dear Humphrey: I wish you could feel like running up here to 'The Horn of the Moon' to pass a few days with us. You know I have always told you this region was full of mystery. Now, I know it is. Please bring the most powerful night glasses you can buy. I shall drive down to the train to meet you on Thursday morning. The apple trees are in bloom—and I am sure you will find 'The Moon' more attractive than your old New York.

"HELEN AMBLER."

The other letter was terse. Written upon the official paper of the Comptroller of the Currency, at Washington, it merely said:

"You will probably be called upon to handle a case for the First Federal Reserve Bank. Hold yourself in readiness to take the matter up night or day."

The signature was that of the Comptroller, himself.

Gazing from one letter to the other, Grey thrummed his desk. Always a mystery to his nigh countless acquaintances, Humphrey Grey had been catalogued by them as an idler. Gossipy speculation ascribed his frequent absences from his usual haunts to wanderlust, but never, in its wildest flights, did it strike the fact—that the suave young pleasurer was an investigator so trusted by the Comptroller of the Currency that he employed him in problems confronting his department that were of too far-reaching moment even to place in the hands of the Secret Service.

On any other occasion Grey would have rejoiced at the prospect of being called upon to handle a case involving the recently established and most powerful financial institution in the country. But with Helen's letter before him, it did not appeal to him.

The vision of a mocking face appeared to him. He could almost smell the apple blossoms. The very name "The Horn of the Moon" fascinated him, and the girl's request that he bring the strongest pair of night glasses he could buy piqued his curiosity.

He tried to recall the various stories he had heard concerning Helen's father, Felix Ambler, but beyond the facts that he was a widower and had been an inveterate globe-trotter before the neglect of his money had enabled a rascally trustee to squander most of it and forced him to repair to his country estate, he could remember nothing of moment.

"Today is Wednesday," he finally exclaimed. "Helen will drive to the train tomorrow. The Federal Reserve Bank case can wait."

And searching out a pathfinder, Grey quickly learned the time of departure of the train he must take in order not to disappoint Helen, packed his gladstones, then went in quest of the night glasses.

CHAPTER II.

THE air was laden with the odors of apple and cherry blossoms and the deeper tang of evergreens as Grey stepped from the train early the next morning. Setting down his gladstones on the station platform, he was breathing deep of the delicious air, when a girl, redolent with health, dashed up in a natty dogcart and drew rein in front of him.

"Humphrey, you're a dear!" she exclaimed. "The pater said you would not come—that I should have gone more into detail, but I thought you would. Did you bring the glasses?"

Despite the seeming ease of the girl's speech and manner, Grey was conscious both of a sense of relief at his presence and of a haunting worry.

"Of course I did," he replied, arranging his bags in the trap and then mounting himself. "But just let me enjoy this glorious air, won't you? Is that 'The Horn of the Moon?'" And he nodded toward a huge mass of rock and earth that rose, towering, ahead of them. "Is there a man, too, in this moon of yours? I know there is a gi——"

Chancing to glance at his companion, Grey ceased his banter, abruptly. An indefinable expression had settled on her face and, instead of replying, Helen flecked her horse sharply with the whip. The animal, being spirited, resented this act and while the girl was exerting all her skill to manage him, Grey studied the rugged mountain.

From base to more than half its height it was as other mountains, tree and pasture covered. But with a suddenness that was surprising the trees dwindled to scrubby spruce and hemlocks, then all vegetation ceased abruptly, leaving a cap of bare, forbidding rock that bent curiously to one side.

"'The Horn of the Moon,' evidently," Grey told himself. "I wonder——" but his thoughts were interrupted by the sudden turn of the trap, which took them into a spruce-lined drive that terminated before the broad steps of a piazza which surrounded a delightfully rambling old farmhouse.

With a promptness that showed expectation, the doors were thrown open and a tall, splendidly built man, delicate, yet powerful of face, his head capped with hair of startling blackness, came out to greet them.

"You were right, weren't you, Girl?" he smiled. "Glad to see you, Humphrey. Did you bring the glasses?"

Again the question, again the air of ill-concealed anxiety.

"He brought them," answered Helen for the young man.

As with the girl, so this knowledge seemed to relieve Mr. Ambler, and he became on the instant the considerate, cultured host.

While he changed into clothes more suitable for roaming the woods, Grey wondered what the circumstances could be that so obviously prayed upon the Amblers. At breakfast, he told himself, they would either clear up the mystery, or he would ask for a solution. But when he rejoined the family no mention was made of the matter, and his several very patent attempts to draw forth the information were adroitly evaded. And so it was throughout the day, while they drove through or ranged the fragrant woods.

But with the coming of night, the delightful ease of the day vanished. Both the girl and her father seemed constantly on the alert. Their faces were anxious, and they were palpably ill at ease. As the servants piled the huge open fireplace with logs and filled the wood baskets, the Amblers forced conversation, but when they were alone again, they grew silent, staring into the fire, and always listening.

Going to his room, Grey returned with the package containing the night glasses, and handed it to Helen. With trembling fingers, she opened it, hurriedly inspected the glasses, then jumped to her feet and ran out onto the piazza, followed by the two men who stood, one on either side, as she adjusted the focus for her eyes.

"Oh, these are wonderful, wonderful, Humphrey!" she cried delightedly. "Just think! I can see the knob on 'The Horn,' pater."

Almost roughly Mr. Ambler snatched the binoculars from her hands, rapidly found his focus, then stared long and earnestly.

"They are, indeed, powerful, Girl. Humphrey, I couldn't have done better myself—if I had been selecting them. Now for the 'comet'—it is due tonight!"

CHAPTER III.

Determined to force the issue without further delay, Grey exclaimed: "Comet—due tonight? I don't understand."

"No wonder," smiled Mr. Ambler. "It does sound cryptic, doesn't it?" Then the lightness of his tone changed, as he continued: "Come to my den and I will explain. Girl, will you watch, or will you wait for us in the library?"

Unconsciously, ignorant of the facts as he was, Grey felt himself hanging upon her words and it was with a distinct feeling of relief that he heard her answer: "I will watch."

And even as she spoke, Helen ran into the house, the binoculars firmly clutched in her hands, while her father called after her: "Remember, if anything arouses your slightest suspicion, press the button for me. We will join you as soon as possible."

Deciding that it must be an attack of some sort that his host feared, Grey impatiently watched while Mr. Ambler carefully locked the front doors, and then as carefully made the round of the rooms, inspecting every window fastening and every door bolt.

"Why not join Helen at once?" Grey finally demanded. "You can explain matters there——"

"Because I shall wish to give all my attention to 'The Horn of the Moon.' Besides, there have been certain developments of which Helen is, as yet, ignorant. Just put your hand on my back and follow me."

With the words, Mr. Ambler touched a button and the electric lights went out. Through darkness more intense because of its suddenness, his guide led the way into what seemed to Grey a part of the house that he had not before been in. Suddenly, he heard a faint click, then sensed the odor of a subtle perfume.

"Stand where you are," admonished his host.

Again came the click, then a flood of delicate green light burst through the darkness, revealing to Grey a room barbaric in its luxury. Rare Persian weaves covered the walls upon which were hung pictures, eachings, photographs, arms, and keen-edged weapons in a confusion that was wonderful in its effect. To Grey, gazing in fascination, came Ambler's voice:

"Never mind these things now. You will have time to examine them later—perhaps. Just take that chair by my table and listen to me without comment, please. Tonight I have only time to synopsize. Later, if necessary, I will go into detail.

"Ten years ago, I was forced to prosecute a Persian, Alpashar, in Bokhara, for substituting inferior pearls in a necklace that I had purchased for Mrs. Ambler. I was warned that the fellow was the master of a coterie of adepts, with the Eastern meaning to the word. This made no difference to me. I had searched far and wide for the pearls—and they were magnificent, in all truth. I could have forgiven anything better than the clever substitution—even their destruction.

"The adept was convicted and sentenced to twenty-five years at hard labor. I have never recovered the original pearls."

While he had been talking, Ambler had slid back a hidden wall panel, taking out a Damascene steel box which he had unlocked and opened.

"Two weeks ago, just at dusk, my cook came to me, saying that a man had just called and requested her to give me this note, without delay." And taking a piece of papyrus from the box, he read: "The pearls are still in Bokhara. If you go to the third house from the Balaam Mosque, at sundown, and state your name, the pearls will be given to you without condition or request for reward."

"I questioned Minnie, but she said it was too dark for her to see the man who had brought the message, but that he spoke like the purr of a cat, to use her own words. Inquiry in the village and among my neighbors failed to disclose any one who had seen a stranger. Five days later I received in the same manner as before this note: 'The offer to restore your pearls is only open for six weeks.'

"Now, six weeks is practically the time it would take me to reach Bokhara, provided I had started immediately upon receiving the message.

"Two days after the receipt of this second communication, Helen, hearing our dogs barking in the night, went to the window to quiet them. Chancing to look toward the 'The Horn of the Moon,' she saw a ball of fire—like a comet—flash past, to the north of the knob of 'The Horn.'

"We watched for it the next night, but without seeing it. The second night it came. It appears every other night—and tonight it is——"

The snarling whir of an electric buzzer broke in upon the sentence.

Leaping to his feet, Ambler seized Grey by the arm. "Helen has seen something!" he gasped. his voice a dry rattle. "Come!"

CHAPTER IV.

How he managed to keep his feet as they sped through the dark halls and up and down steps and stairs, Grey did not know. He was conscious of moving, but almost before his mental vision had closed to Ambler's den, he found himself in an octagonal cupola, heavy with the odor of firearms and shells.

"Some one is signaling from the knob of 'The Horn!'" breathed the girl, handing the binoculars to her father.

With lightning movement, Mr. Ambler readjusted the focus. Scarcely breathing, all three stared.

"There it is! There it is!" cried the man with the glasses, while Helen and Grey strained their eyes, peering toward the rocky peak, yet they could see nothing.

There fell a moment's silence, then Ambler continued: "Confound it! I can't make it out! It's just short and long flashes!"

"Telegraphing!" cried Helen.

At her father's words, Grey took the binoculars from his hands.

"You're right!" he murmured. "And it's plain Morse code, too! I can read it! Put the letters down as I give them to you."

With his words, the girl dropped to her knees, turned on a tiny electric night bulb and snatched paper and pencil from one of the window seats, while her father, hooding the bulb with his cap, waited anxiously for the message.

"Quick!" breathed Grey. "'Eygr—eyc—amet—hi — smor — ningw — emu — sta—ctgob—ackan—dcle—anup.'"

Waiting only to make sure that the telegraphing had ceased, Grey swung the glasses to west, to north, to east, to south.

"Here's your comet!" he cried, holding his gaze in the last direction. "Jove! it's answering!" And again Grey announced: "'Nons—enseh—eisa — thomeis — awhima — thisro — omsthi — spmma — kere—adyth—elan—ding.'"

As the young investigator again grew silent, Mr. Ambler exclaimed: "What sort of lingo is that? I could catch a few combinations. They sounded like Persian, but they made no sense."

"I think I got all the letters; I took them down as best I could," Helen declared. "We can study them later. May I take the glasses, Humphrey? I should like a peep at my 'comet.'"

"Under the circumstances, the only thing it can be is an aeroplane," declared her father.

"Oh, it is! It is! I can see the wings and tail."

With such speed did the machine travel that while Helen was announcing her observations, the seeming ball of fire swept into view of the naked eye, then, with an abruptness that was startling, vanished, apparently dashed to destruction against the knob of 'The Horn.'

CHAPTER V.

THE first to recover from the shock of the aeroplane's eerie disappearance was Mr. Ambler.

"Quick! The messages!" he cried. "We must know what they say. Helen, take Humphrey to your den. I will remain here to watch. If there is any more signaling, I will sound your buzzer once; if I need you for any other reason, I will press it twice.

"Now, hurry. When you have deciphered the first message—if you can—Helen will bring it to me while you are studying over the second, Humphrey. You can understand my eagerness to know what they say."

But the last words fell on unhearing ears, for the girl and her companion were already on their way to her den.

Switching on the lights, Helen motioned Grey to the chair at her writing table, placed the hurriedly scrawled messages before him, fetched another chair, and sat down beside him.

Running rapidly over the combinations—for even as he had announced them he had realized that they formed no recognized words—Grey asked Helen to tell him a letter here and there, then took a clean sheet of paper and a pencil.

"These messages are in no foreign language, just plain English, to my way of thinking. So the quickest way to read them is to put all the letters down, one after the other, without the dashes, and then pick the words as best we can, beginning at the first letter," he declared, the while transcribing the letters so that he had before him "eygreycamethismorningwemustactgobackand cleanup."

"Now, let's see. The man on the knob of 'The Horn' was signaling before I took the glasses. Obviously, therefore, the first letter, or letters, can be eliminated.

"Crossing out the 'e,' we have a word beginning with 'y'—of which there are very few. So we will cross out the 'y' also.

"Now, I'll spell out the letters and you can see if you recognize any words. G—r—e—y—"

"Why, that's your name, Humphrey!" cried the girl, looking at her companion in amazement. "And the 'e' and 'y' are the end of Humphrey."

But Grey made no reply. Rapidly he was scanning the rest of the letters, making perpendicular marks between them, now and then.

"There is the first message," he said, as he wrote the words on another sheet of paper. "Take it to your father. By the time you return, the other will be ready."

Gazing at the paper, Helen read: "Ey Grey came this morning. We must act. Go back and clean up."

"What can it mean?" she murmured.

"Your father is waiting."

The timbre of Grey's voice was so different from its usual suavity that the girl glanced at him, noted the expression on his face, and hastened to carry the paper to her father.

If Grey had been astounded at the first message—for it had startled him to learn that any one, other than the Amblers, should even know of his departure from New York, to say nothing of his destination, and that his arrival was deemed of sufficient importance to the mysterious unknowns to be flashed through the night—he was nonplused as he contemplated the second. And when the girl reappeared, she found him pacing the floor like a wild man.

"What is the ma——" she began, only to be interrupted by Grey, asking:

"When can I get a train to New York?"

"Why—er——" she stammered. Then, eager to prove that she was a girl who could be cool under unusual circumstances, she continued quietly: "The New York express passes through here at 1:20. It is now 12:45."

"Does it stop?"

"It will for passengers for New York—but it waits twenty minutes at Norfolk Junction, nine miles below. But——"

"Great! That is better yet. If any one is on the lookout on 'The Horn,' he would see the express stop at your station and suspect something. But they will never think to cover the Junction—after the second message. Is the road difficult to find?"

"Practically straight, after you reach the State highway."

"You have saddle horses?"

"Yes. But why must you go back when you have only just come from New York and when we—we need you here?"

"Read this." And Grey handed the girl the message which had been flashed from the aeroplane: "Nonsense. He is at home. I saw him at his rooms this p. m. Make ready the landing."

"It is because we, also, must have an aeroplane here to get a peep at the unknowns on 'The Moon'—you remember your father said yesterday afternoon that it is impossible to scale the peak—that I am obliged to go to New York. Besides, I should rather like to know who is so kindly making himself at home in my rooms."

"Then we are losing precious time. I'll take this message to the pater, and then we'll go to the stable."

Grey, however, insisted upon accompanying her and briefly explained his intentions to her father. "By acting quickly, I can get to New York and be back here before they discover that I have gone. I happen to know that daredevil, Marchmont, and such an aerial expedition will appeal to him."

"What shall we do in the meantime?" queried Mr. Ambler.

"Just act as though tonight's occurrences had not happened. Burn all the message papers. Tomorrow night, watch for two flashes from the west. I'll drop in on you on the following day."

Leaving Helen to watch "The Horn of the Moon," the two men descended to the stable, saddled a powerful black, Mr. Ambler gave instructions for finding the State highway and for disposing of the horse at the Junction, then Grey mounted the black and galloped away down the spruce-lined drive.

CHAPTER VI.

THANKS to the mettle of his mount, Grey reached the Junction in time to stable the horse and to board the New York express, just as it was pulling out of the station. Arrived at the bachelor quarters where he lived, he sought the superintendent.

"Who has been in my rooms?" he asked.

"No one but yourself, sir. Why, is anything wrong?"

Ignoring the question, Grey inquired: "By the way, when was it you saw me last?"

TO LEDGER READERS

Be sure and read "DETECTIVE GREY'S COUP; or, THE HORN OF THE MOON," in this issue. It is a very unusual and fascinating story. Look out next week for the Fourth of July issue. It will be full of fun, and contain the first part of a remarkable serial story of Revolutionary War times by T. C. Harbaugh, entitled "DOROTHY PAYNE, REBEL; or, AN ENEMY OF THE KING." Also another great sea story by William H. Manning is being illustrated. It is called "MAD MAGIC AFLOAT; or, THE SHIP OF ILL OMEN." It is a corker for interest and excitement. Don't miss it. We also advise you to read "SIDE SHOW SIDELIGHTS," a series of funny circus and side show stories, beginning in this issue. Boys, we will soon give you another Indian war story by Captain Jack Judson, called "PRISONERS OF TECUMSEH; or, THE BOYS OF OLD FORT MEIGS," and we have some rattling good Boy Scout stories to follow that. We have in preparation a most interesting series of short stories to be run under the head of "SOUTHLAND STORIES," also a strong series of "OUT WEST STORIES;" besides, fine detective stories and stories of adventure and of love. Don't let your subscription lapse or quit taking the Ledger, or you will miss a constant weekly treat of good things.

"Why, yesterday, sir. Don't you remember? You were sitting with your back to the door when I came in with the man to clean the windows. You told me not to bother with them this week."

The manner in which the superintendent regarded Grey while he was making this—to Grey—surprising statement, warned the latter that it were better not to continue the interview, and with an "Oh, yes, I remember now," he made his way to the elevator.

As he stepped forth into the corridor that led to his rooms, Grey's every sense was alert. With a caution astonishing in a supposed idler, he approached his door, opened it noiselessly, then stood still in amazement.

"Comptroller Curry!" he gasped.

"The same," smiled that official, who was just emerging from a side room into Grey's library when the latter opened the door. "Permit me to suggest that you close the door, then I will explain my presence."

Acting on the suggestion, Grey shut the door, then dropped into a chair and gazed at the Comptroller expectantly.

"Things happened rather quickly after I wrote to you—things that I did not care to trust to paper—so I came over to see you. Discovering that you were not at home, and not wishing any one to know that I was in New York—I am even now supposed to be in Washington, thanks to the close resemblance between my confidential secretary and myself—I took the unusual liberty of opening your door and making myself at home. I——"

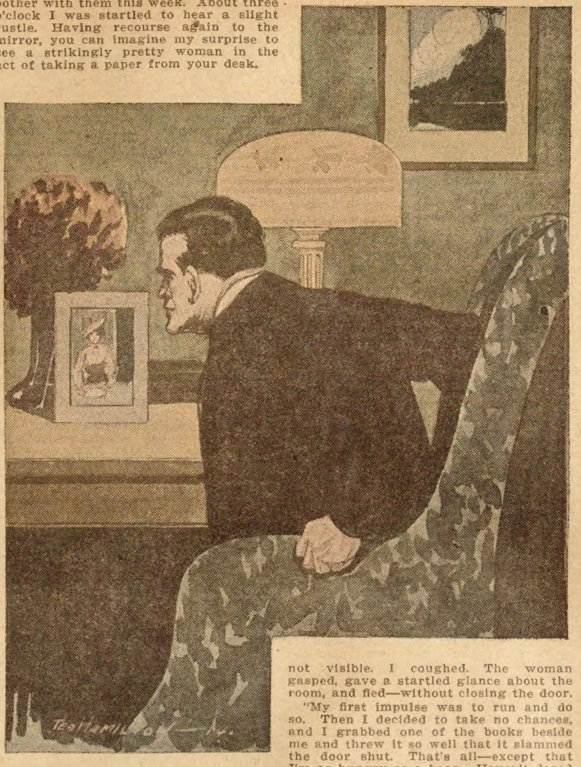
"You mean that you have a key to my door?" demanded Grey, in no pleasant tone.

"Well, hardly that. But instead of being incensed at me, you should be grateful. You had two callers who did not trouble to knock, or ring, either. I fancy my being here saved your belongings a thorough overhauling, at least.

"Now, let me finish, please. Bent only upon concealing my presence, I drew that lounging chair over to the bookcase and placed your shaving mirror on the table—they are still in position—in such a manner that I could watch the door. Then I so arranged myself in the chair that only the back of my head was visible. My one thought was to see you when you opened the door that I might declare myself before you put a bullet into my head.

"I had been there about an hour, when, though I heard no sound, I was conscious of the door being opened. Turning to my glass, I saw a much bewhiskered face peering cautiously around. At about the same time, the man evidently caught sight of the back of my head, for he vanished as silently as he had come.

"Next came your janitor with a boy to clean the windows. I told him not to bother with them this week. About three o'clock I was startled to hear a slight rustle. Having recourse again to the mirror, you can imagine my surprise to see a strikingly pretty woman in the act of taking a paper from your desk.



"I saw a pretty woman take a paper from your desk."

"Evidently I had slouched down in my chair so that the back of my head was not visible. I coughed. The woman gasped, gave a startled glance about the room, and fled—without closing the door.

"My first impulse was to run and do so. Then I decided to take no chances, and I grabbed one of the books beside me and threw it so well that it slammed the door shut. That's all—except that I'm as hungry as a bear. Haven't dared go out or send for meals. So, if you will order breakfast, we will take up the Federal Reserve case."

During this narrative, Grey's emotions had run riot. It angered him to think that the Comptroller, or any one else, could enter his rooms at will. Then, as the official said that the only visitor during the afternoon was a woman, he was forced to conclude that it was she who had flashed the message from the aeroplane, for the message had said: "I saw him at his rooms this p. m." Yet the remainder: "Nonsense. He is at home," and the "Make ready the landing" sounded more like a man.

The voice of his self-invited guest interrupted his meditations, however: "Well, what about breakfast—or can't you forgive my intrusion?"

"Though I don't like the idea of your having access to my rooms, Comptroller, it is evident that your being here saved my effects from something. So I am grateful. How do grape fruit, shirred eggs, a rasher of bacon, baked potatoes, muffins, and coffee strike you?"

"Very right, as an appetizer."

And when Grey had telephoned the order, the official continued. "While we are waiting, I'll get started on the Federal Reserve case."

"No use, Curry, I——"

"No use?" repeated the astonished official. "What do you mean? You have never failed me yet."

"I'm sorry, but I'm on another case."

"But, man dear, this is the most puzzling business I ever had. You simply must take it—and at your own price."

"Sorry——"

"I'll not take a 'no,' Grey. I'm positive it's a swindle, but I can't put my hand on it. And if I don't, no end of banks throughout the world may lose money."

"I'd like to help you, Comptroller, but my case involves two intimate friends. However, if I have good luck, perhaps I can take up the Federal Reserve matter in a few days or a week—if it can wait that long."

"A few days or a week? Man dear, if I were obliged to have pearls on my mind for a week longer, I'd go insane!"

"Pearls, did you say?" And Grey made no attempt to conceal his excitement.

"Pearls, yes; green, pink, blue, and purple pearls! Nothing but pearls."

"But what have pearls to do with the First Federal Reserve Bank case?"

"Everything—that's what it is about!"

This story, developing very thrilling happenings, will be continued in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year; it is worth many times that amount. Send in your subscription, for many great stories that you cannot afford to miss will appear during the coming year.

* * *

True love is never too good to be true.

How One Man Loved

Or, Lupton's Remarkable Case

By Emma Howard Wight

[Copyright 1914 by W. D. Boyce Co.]

Begun in No. 24, June 13. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

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CHAPTER VIII.

YOU mean Frederick Lupton, the banker and broker?" queried Ambrose, the detective, looking at Raymond, president of the Criterion Life Insurance Company.

"Yes. He was supposed to be a very rich man, but after his death it developed that he was on the eve of bankruptcy. The policy was taken out only six weeks before his death. It is in favor of his wife, Kathleen Lupton, and his sister, Dorothy Lupton. The circumstances attending Lupton's death justify the company in making an investigation."

"I remember reading of his death in the newspapers at the time," observed the detective. "He was found dead."

"Yes, in his library. He was last seen, I understand, at about twelve o'clock that night, apparently in good health. In the morning he was found dead upon a couch. In the death certificate the cause of death is given as heart failure."

"Then there was no post-mortem?" queried Ambrose.

"No, I believe it was suggested by the family physician, but the family opposed it." He paused a moment and then added, "If developments in the case justify it we shall have the body exhumed and an autopsy held."

"You think there is a possibility that Lupton committed suicide?"

"Yes."

"Were there any indications of suicide?"

"No direct indications. He may have taken poison. His financial condition leaves the manner of his death open to conjecture." The detective nodded. "He was married less than a year ago. His wife is young and very beautiful. It is possible that Lupton, knowing he was financially ruined, insured his life to secure his wife and sister, and then committed suicide. It would not be the first case of the kind we have had," and he smiled grimly.

"An autopsy alone will settle the question as to what caused Lupton's death," declared Detective Ambrose. "No doubt the family would oppose it."

"That is very possible," declared the president. "I want you to go to work on the case at once, Ambrose. If you find out anything that justifies it, we will appeal to the courts for an order to have the body exhumed and an autopsy performed."

"What if the body were embalmed?" suggested the detective.

President Raymond shrugged his shoulders.

"That, of course, would render a post-mortem of no avail. You had better find out about that first, Ambrose."

"If such is the case, will the company pay the policy without further question?" queried the detective.

President Raymond considered a moment.

"No," he replied, with decision. "We propose to make a thorough investigation. We will not pay the policy until we are satisfied that everything was square."

Detective Ambrose arose. "I'll take the matter up at once," he said.

He passed out of the president's private office, left the building, and proceeded to the office of Doctor Sydnor, the family physician of the Luptons. He had to wait some little time before he was shown into the Doctor's office. Doctor Sydnor was one of the best known physicians in New York, and had an immense practice. His reputation for probity and honor was unquestioned.

As Detective Ambrose, who was pale and cadaverous, entered the private office, Doctor Sydnor glanced him over professionally.

"I am not a patient, Doctor," Ambrose declared, with a grim smile, "though possibly I look as if I might be."

Doctor Sydnor laughed, but an expression of gravity settled upon his face as Detective Ambrose made known his business.

"So the company intends to make a fight against paying," he observed. "I was afraid of that," he added, half to himself.

"The circumstances attending the death of Mr. Lupton justify the company in deferring payment until an investigation has been made," amended the detective.

"I see," said Doctor Sydnor, with a half-shrug of the shoulders.

"You examined Mr. Lupton. for life insurance, Doctor?"

"Yes, and passed him."

"He was physicially sound?"

"Of course. I found, however, that his nerves were in a bad way. In fact, he was laboring under a mental strain, and had been for some time."

"To what did you attribute that?"

"At the time I did not know what was the cause. After his death I fancied it was due to worrying over his financial condition."

"Were you surprised, Doctor, to learn of Mr. Lupton's financial condition?"

"Yes," replied the physician, unhesitatingly. "I thought that Frederick Lupton was a rich and prosperous man." He paused a moment, and then added, "In fact, I am sure that he was, up to within the last eight or nine months."

'What do you think caused him to become so involved?"

"He must have speculated heavily, being smitten with the mania to make more money and make it fast. It proved his undoing."

"Were there any indications that Mr. Lupton ended his life by taking poison, Doctor?" asked the detective.

"None whatever, as far as I could see," was the ready answer. "He had the appearance of having died in his sleep."

"A narcotic poison, such as morphine or chloral, would have produced the same effect, would it not?" asked Ambrose.

"Well, yes," admitted the physician.

"Was there an inquest?"

"No. I sent for the coroner, and we thought it best to perform an autopsy. The widow and sister of Mr. Lupton would not consent." The physician paused a moment, hesitating as to whether he would give the reasons why the autopsy had been opposed, but decided that it was best not to put the detective into possession of them. "The coroner did not push the matter, so I gave a certificate that death was due to heart failure."

"I do not think the company will accept that as cause of death," declared Detective Ambrose. "The policy was against suicide, and it must be proved to the satisfaction of the company that Frederick Lupton did not die by his own hand."

"I regret very much that there should be any trouble about payment on account of those two helpless women who will be practically penniless if the insurance is not paid," declared Doctor Sydnor, with great sincerity.

"The company has to protect itself, you know," the detective reminded him.

"I understand that," the physician admitted.

"By the way, Doctor, was the body of Frederick Lupton embalmed?" asked the detective.

"No, the family did not wish it. There was really no occasion for it. The body was remarkably preserved up to the time of burial. In fact, I don't think I ever saw so lifelike a corpse."

The detective recalled to mind that he had heard that there were certain mineral poisons that had the effect of wonderfully preserving the body, but he said nothing about it. He simply remarked that the body not having been embalmed would greatly simplify matters.

"You mean that the company will try to have the body exhumed and a post-mortem held?" exclaimed Doctor Sydnor.

"I think that is very likely," admitted the detective.

Doctor Sydnor suppressed a sigh, and a troubled look passed over his face. He was thinking of the widow and sister of the dead man. What would they do if it was established that Frederick Lupton died by his own hand? And the physician was very much afraid that such was the case. There were circumstances that pointed that way, and it would not be the first case where a ruined man had taken that way of providing for his dear ones. A strong friendship had existed between the physician and the dead man. Doctor Sydnor had known Dorothy Lupton from childhood and was very fond of her. He knew how perfectly helpless she would be in the face of poverty. A child, thrown upon its own resources, would not be more so. And the beautiful young wife of the dead man! Doctor Sydnor did not feel for her so acutely as he did for Dorothy. He had a feeling that Frederick Lupton's marriage had brought about his undoing. He shrewdly suspected that his frenzied desire to make more money had been that he might lavish it on the wife he adored.

Detective Ambrose arose to depart.

"Does the company intend to take measures immediately in regard to the exhuming of the body?" asked the physician.

"No," replied Ambrose, "not until I have made an investigation. I have just started to work up the case."

"You will proceed upon the theory that Frederick Lupton committed suicide?"

"Yes, I shall start on that theory," replied Ambrose, as he arose to go. "Developments may cause me to work along other lines."

"You know it is quite possible that Frederick Lupton may have developed some organic trouble which resulted in his death during the time that elapsed after he had taken out the policy on his life," said Doctor Sydnor, as he arose.

"That is possible, of course," admitted the detective, and then he took his departure.

CHAPTER IX.

A FEW days after the funeral of Frederick Lupton, his lawyer, Marshall Carroll, had informed the widow and sister of his financial condition at the time of his death, that he was on the ever of bankruptcy. The interview took place in the library. The lawyer broke the news to the two black-garbed women as gently as possible. Dorothy stared at him as though stunned. Kathleen, leaning back wearily in her chair, glanned up quickly. She was pale, but very beautiful, in her black gown which brought out very effectively her exquisite coloring. Dorothy's blonde prettiness had for the time vanished. Constant weeping had washed the pink from her cheeks, her eyelids were purple and swollen, her lips pale and dry.

"Do—do you mean that we are poor?" she gasped.

The lawyer bowed. "I am afraid there is very little money," he replied reluctantly.

"Oh, how dreadful!" moaned Dorothy, with something like despair. "What will we do?" and she looked helplessly at Kathleen.

"We are not left unprovided for," declared Kathleen, quietly. She turned to the lawyer. "My husband's life was insured for $700,000," she explained.

"I am indeed glad to hear it," exclaimed the lawyer, with much sincerity. Dorothy drew a long breath of relief. "Mr. Lupton did not tell me that his life was insured," added the lawyer. "Do you know when the policy was taken out?"

"About six weeks before his death," replied Kathleen. She paused a moment, then continued. "Mr. Lupton called me into this room one evening and showed me a life insurance policy for $700,000, which he told me he had taken out that day. He said that it was made in favor of Dorothy and myself. He placed the policy in that safe," and she pointed to a safe built in the wall.

"We had better see if the policy is still in the safe," suggested the lawyer, rising, and going toward the safe. "I can open it. Mr. Lupton once showed me the combination."

He found no difficulty in opening the safe, and after a little search the policy was found. The lawyer opened it and glanced it through.

"Policy on the Criterion Life Insurance Company for $700,000," he explained. "Three hundred thousand dollars made payable to Dorothy Lupton and four hundred thousand to Kathleen Lupton."

"Will we get the money at once?" asked Kathleen, with some eagerness.

The lawyer explained that the company had a certain time in which to pay. He foresaw complications, but of that he said nothing.

A month had passed, the saddest, loneliest month of Dorothy Lupton's heretofore bright and unshadowed life. Instead of being drawn more closely together by a common sorrow, Dorothy and Kathleen seemed to be drifting apart. Something had come between them, vague, intangible, but potent in effect. Each was sensible of it, but powerless to break through the barrier.

One afternoon, as Kathleen and Dorothy were sitting together in the former's boudoir, Dorson entered and handed Kathleen a card. Dorothy, glancing at her, saw a hot flush mount to her brow, then recede, leaving her very pale. She stared at Kathleen wonderingly. The latter seemed to hesitate for a moment, then she said:

"I will see Mr. Livingstone."

Dorson bowed and left the room. Dorothy's breath quickened; she felt suddenly chilled.

"Mr. Livingstone has called," Kathleen said, rising and making an effort to speak naturally.

Dorothy said nothing, but she looked very straight and steadily at Kathleen. Their eyes met; Kathleen's wavered and sank. She seemed to shrink under the questioning look in the girl's pathetic eyes. For a moment she seemed to hesitate, then with bowed head she passed out of the room.

And in those few moments Dorothy knew—knew and wondered at her own blindness. She sat very pale and very still. Her first feeling was one of passionate resentment at the wrong done her brother.

"He loved her, oh, how dearly he loved her!" she cried aloud, her eyes filling with bitter tears. "And she—oh, it is dreadful, shameful!"

Then after a little while, she arose and crept away to her own room. She dropped upon her knees beside the bed, and hid her face in her arms. But she shed no tears over the grave in which she buried her own love dream.

In the meantime, Kathleen, with wildly throbbing heart, went slowly down the stairs. Outside the receptionroom door she paused a moment, trying to calm herself; then she opened the door and entered.

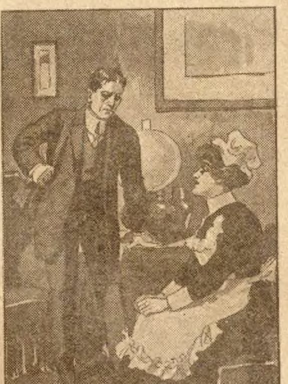
Livingstone was standing watching the door, and he came to meet her with glowing eyes and outstretched arms. The black gown she wore for the husband but a month dead had no power to chill him. To his artistic eye its somberness only served to enhance her exquisite coloring and render her the more lovely.

"Kathleen!" he murmured. "Kathleen!" And his arms closed about her, their lips met and clung together.

After a few moments she withdrew herself from his arms.

"Oh, Godfrey, you should not have come—yet!" she murmured. "It is—too soon."

"I could not remain away any longer," he declared, his eyes dwelling upon her passionately. "This month has seemed a century. Come, sit down, dearest. I want to talk with you." He led the way to a couch, drawing her down beside him. "Kathleen, when will you marry me?" he asked.



"Monsieur is a detective?"

She started and drew away from him.

"Oh, Godfrey, don't!" she cried. "It seems dreadful to talk of that so soon. You know it is out of the question for us to marry for a year, at least."

He laughed softly.

"I know that is the conventional period," he said. "But, my darling, there is no reason why we should conform to it. We can go away—anywhere you wish—and be married. Our little world will be none the wiser. And we—ah, my beloved, think of how happy we shall be!" He tried to draw her into his arms, but she resisted him.

"Do not tempt me, Godfrey!" she pleaded. "Let me at least pay proper respect to his memory. That is all I can do, and it is so little." She caught her breath with a quivering sigh, her eyes wide and strained. "And there is Dorothy! What could we say to her? She would be so shocked, so hurt, so grieved. Oh, no, no! It is not to be thought of."

Livingstone shrugged his shoulders with a touch of impatience. He had forgotten Dorothy. She would make matters a little difficult. Livingstone was not a man lightly to relinquish any purpose on which his heart was set, but he had too much tact to press Kathleen any further just then. His tender words, his passionate caresses soon brought back the lovely color to her cheeks and the lovelight and glow to her eyes.

A little later, as Kathleen and Livingstone came out into the hall, Dorson had just admitted Detective Ambrose. The latter gave them a keen glance. Kathleen turned toward the stairs, Livingstone came toward the door, which Dorson opened for him.

CHAPTER X.

"WHO is the gentleman?" asked the detective, as the door closed upon Livingstone.

"Mr. Godfrey Livingstone, the artist," replied Dorson.

"And I suppose the young lady was Miss Lupton?"

"No, that was Mrs. Lupton," declared Dorson.

The detective looked thoughtful. He was too keen an observer not to be aware of the fact that Livingstone and Kathleen were lovers. He had concluded that the girl was Miss Lupton. It set him thinking to learn that she was the widow of the dead man.

"May I ask what your business is?" asked Dorson, a trifle sharply.

"My business just now is to put a few questions to you, my man," replied Ambrose, briskly. He threw back his coat, as he spoke, displaying his badge. "Take me to come place where we shall not be interrupted."

Dorson led the way down the hall to the library. Ambrose gave a keen glance about the room and then took a seat. He motioned Dorson to a chair.

"How long have you been in the service of the Luptons?" he asked.

"Two years," replied Dorson.

"When did you last see Mr. Lupton alive on the night of the 25th of March?"

"At about twelve o'clock."

"Where did you see him?"

"In this room. I brought Mr. Lupton a glass of wine which he had ordered."

"Were you the last person who saw him alive?"

"No, his wife was the last person who saw him alive."

"How do you know that?"

"She was in the room when I brought the wine. I left here here when I went out."

"Do you know how long she remained?"

"I do not."

"Did Mr. Lupton drink the wine while you were in the room?"

"No. I put the wine on the desk beside him, and he told me I could go to bed, he didn't need me any more."

"Who discovered the body of Mr. Lupton?"

"I did." And Dorson went on to tell all the circumstances up to the time he had gone to the desk to telephone for Doctor Sydnor, when he suddenly stopped.

"Well, what happened next?" queried the detective, sharply.

"I happened to glance at an empty wine glass, and I saw a white sediment at the bottom," said Dorson.

"Ah!" the detective became suddenly very alert.

"What did you think when you saw the sediment?" he saked.

Dorson hesitated.

"Well, I just thought that maybe Mr. Lupton had taken something to kill himself," he said, at length.

"Did you speak of what you thought to any one?"

"Yes, I spoke of it to Lormon. Mr. Lupton's man."

"What did he say?"

"He said it was nonsense, that Mr. Lupton hadn't done anything of the kind. Lormon got considerable wrought up over it."

"Who removed the wine glass from the library?"

"I did. And the queer part of it was that when I took it away the wine glass had been wiped clean."

"You mean that the sediment had been removed?"

"Yes, every trace of it was gone."

"Who had been in the room in the meanwhile besides yourself and Lormon?"

"Mrs. Lupton and Miss Lupton. Lormon had broken the news to them of Mr. Lupton's death, and they had come down to the library. I was setting the table in the diningroom for breakfast when I suddenly thought about the wine glass. I went back to the library to get it. Mrs. Lupton and Miss Lupton were in the room. Miss Lupton was on her knees beside the couch, sobbing and crying."

"And Mrs. Lupton—what was she doing?" queried the detective, leaning forward a little eagerly.

"She was standing a little way off from the couch very quiet-like."

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"She didn't seem to be as shocked and grieved as Miss Lupton?"

"Well, she wasn't taking on like Miss Lupton," admitted Dorson.

"Was there any one else in the room?"

"Yes, Lormon. I went to the desk and took up the salver with the glass upon it. It wasn't until I was in the pantry that I noticed that the glass had been wiped clean."

"What was the sediment like?"

"I looked like powder that had been dissolved in the wine."

"There were only three persons in the room from the time you discovered the sediment in the wine glass until you took the glass away—Mrs. Lupton, Miss Lupton and Lormon?"

"They were the only ones in the room."

"Then one of those three must have cleaned the glass."

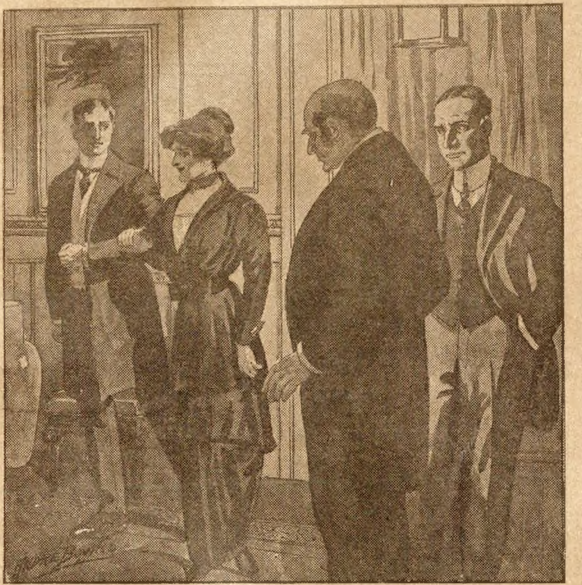
"I know it wasn't Miss Lupton that done it," declared Dorson, with conviction. "She was all broke up with grief."

"And Mrs. Lupton wasn't?"

Dorson hesitated.

"I wouldn't like to say she wasn't grieved," he said at length. "She may be one of the kind that don't show grief."

Detective Ambrose might have thought that, too, but for the look he had seen upon Mrs. Lupton's beautiful face when she came into the hall with Godfrey Livingstone. Adroit questioning drew from Dorson that Mr. Godfrey Livingstone was a frequent visitor to the house previous to the death of Mr. Lupton, and that he was in the habit of sending flowers to both Mrs. and Miss Lupton. Dorson also let drop that Celeste, Mrs. Lupton's maid, had confided to him that Mrs. Lupton had acted very queer the night Mr. Lupton died. Upon which Detective Ambrose immediately expressed a desire to have a talk with Celeste, and Dorson went to fetch her.



"Who is the gentleman?"

While he waited, the detective walked about the room, stopping to gaze meditatively upon the couch on which Frederick Lupton had been found dead, moving from there to the desk, which he contemplated in the same thoughtful manner. He turned as the door opened, and Dorson ushered in the black-eyed, trim-looking French maid, and rather reluctantly withdrew.

Detective Ambrose studied her thoughtfully as she came forward. From the questioning look she bent upon him, it was evident that she had not been enlightened by Dorson as to Ambrose's object in interviewing her.

"I wish to ask you a few questions," the detective began.

"About what, monsieur?" crisply inquired the Frenchwoman.

"About certain things that happened the night of Mr. Lupton's death," promptly replied the detective.

Celeste gave him a quick glance and her black brows lifted.

"Monsieur is a detective," she guessed shrewdly.

Detective Ambrose nodded. Celeste seated herself with deliberation.

"I am at monsieur's service," she declared.

The detective moved away from the desk, and stood leaning upon the back of a chair, facing Celeste.

"Mr. Lupton was greatly attached to his wife, wasn't he?" he asked.

"Indeed, yes, monsieur," replied the maid. "He worshiped the ground she walked on."

"And Mrs. Lupton—was she as devoted to him?"

Celeste pursed her thin lips and shrugged her shoulders.

"Ah, no, monsieur. Madame Lupton was not in love with her husband. I think it was on madame's part what we call in France a 'mariage de convenance.'"

"I want you to tell me all you know about the night Mr. Lupton died." The detective walked around and seated himself as he spoke.

"Monsieur is not very explicit," demurred Celeste.

"I want you to tell me what you know of Mrs. Lupton's action that night."

"Very good, monsieur. Madame Lupton had an engagement to attend a reception that night, but she complained of not feeling well, and did not go. She came upstairs at about half-past eleven, and I helped her change her gown for a negligee, and brushed and braided her hair for the night. I noticed that she looked pale and unlike herself. I asked her if she was feeling worse, and she said no. She said she did not think she would be able to sleep and would go down to the library and get a book and read until she felt sleepy. She left the dressingroom by the door opening upon the hall. I went into the bedroom to arrange everything for the night. I turned down the bed and fixed the night light. Mr. Godfrey Livingstone had sent that day a great box of violets to madame. They were in a bowl on a stand, and the air of the room was heavy with their perfume. I thought that perhaps I had better remove them, but decided not to do so unless madame requested it."

"Was Mr. Godfrey Livingstone in the habit of sending Mrs. Lupton flowers?" queried Detective Ambrose.

The French maid dropped her eyes demurely.

"Why, yes, Monsieur Livingstone is madame's very good friend," she replied.

"Do you mean that he is her lover?"

"Ah, monsieur!" exclaimed Celeste. "I would not go so far as to say that. Monsieur Livingstone is one great artist, and he paints madame's picture. Oh, it is beautiful, beautiful—that picture! I went sometimes with madame for the sittings. Madame was ravishing in the rose-colored gown, and Monsieur Livingstone——" she stopped suddenly with an expressive gesture.

"And I suppose Monsieur Livingstone was keenly alive to that fact," supplemented the detective.

A smile flitted over the Frenchwoman's face.

"What man would not be, monsieur?" she evaded cleverly.

The suspicion of a grim smile touched the detective's lips as he abandoned the point.

"Did you see Mrs. Lupton any more that night?" he asked.

"Yes, monsieur. After arranging the bedroom for the night I went back to the dressingroom. I waited to see if madame required my services any more that night. After a time I heard some one moving in the bedroom. I arose and opened the communicating door." She stopped and hesitated.

"Well?" queried Ambrose.

"Madame was on her knees beside the bowl of violets with her face bent over them. She was half sobbing, half moaning. I heard her say, 'What have I done? oh, what have I done?'"

There was a moment's silence.

"Are you sure that was what she said?" asked the detective.

"Yes, monsieur, I am positive that is what she said," replied the Frenchwoman, convincingly.

CHAPTER XI.

CELESTE came out of the library, flashed her dark eyes at Dorson, who was seated in the chair outside the door, and made her way to the staircase. Dorson's eyes followed admiringly her lithe, swiftly moving figure before he arose and entered the library. He found the detective with his hands thrust deep in his pockets standing gazing thoughtfully out of the window.

"Anything more I can do for you, sir?" inquired Dorson.

The detective turned slowly and looked in a rather abstracted manner at Dorson.

"I want to have a talk with Mr. Lupton's valet," he replied.

"I'll send him to you," said Dorson, turning to go out.

A little later, when Lormon came into the room, the detective studied him rather attentively as he moved slowly across the room.

"Dorson told me that you wished to see me, sir?" said Lormon.

Ambrose nodded.

"Yes. I am a detective in the employ of the Criterion Life Insurance Company," he explained.

Lormon started and cast a frightened glance at the detective.

"What is it you wish with me, sir?" he asked, after a pause.

"I want to ask you some questions."

"Is—is the company going to dispute Mr. Lupton's claim?" asked Lormon, and he waited almost breathlessly for Ambrose to reply.

The latter explained that the company considered that the circumstances under which Mr. Lupton had died justified them in making an investigation.

"I hardly think the company will pay the policy until the cause of Mr. Lupton's death is established," he added.

Lormon's face grew a shade paler.

"How can it be established?" he asked.

"There is but one way, exhuming the body and performing an autopsy," replied the detective.

"The family will never consent to that," exclaimed Lormon, vehemently.

"I have understood that they object," remarked the detective, quietly. "Have they any especial reason?"

"Mr. Frederick had a great horror of a post-mortem," explained Lormon.

"Had he expressed himself to that effect?" asked the detective, with well-feigned carelessness."

"Yes, to Mrs. Lupton and Miss Dorothy, not a great while before he died. He also had a horror of being embalmed."

The last assertion brought a thoughtful look to Ambrose's face. It did not fit in the with the theory of suicide. Frederick Lupton would naturally try to prevent an autopsy from being performed on his body if he contemplated suicide by poison. But why should he try also to prevent the emblaming of his body, which would have destroyed all trace of the poison? But Detective Ambrose was not discouraged by this seeming contradiction, for he was not working altogether on the suicide theory.

"How long had you been in the service of Mr. Lupton?" he asked, turning again to Lormon.

"For more than twenty-five years," was the reply.

The detective gave him a sharp glance.

"That is a long time," he remarked thoughtfully. 'You were no doubt very much attached to Mr. Lupton?"

"I was, sir, very much attached to him," was the quiet answer.

"His sudden death must have been a great shock to you?"

"Naturally," replied Lormon, after a barely perceptible hesitation.

There was an absence of sincerity in the man's manner that was apparent to the detective. He felt instinctively that Lormon had not been shocked at Frederick Lupton's sudden death. If such was the case, what was the explanation? If Lormon had had any suspicion that Mr. Lupton intended ending his life, he surely would have tried to prevent it. According to Dorson, the valet had been most emphatic in asserting that Lupton had not taken his own life.

"I understand that Mr. Lupton drank a glass of wine not so long before his death," said the detective. "I have been informed that a whitish sediment remained in the bottom of the glass." Lormon inclined his head affirmatively. "Later the glass was wiped clean of the sediment. Do you know who cleaned the glass?"

"Yes, it was Mrs. Lupton," was the reply.

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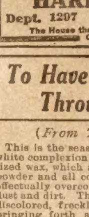

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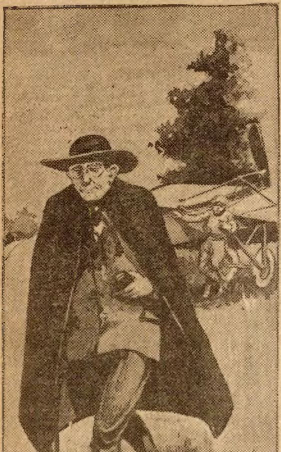

"Be ready the minute I get back."

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CHAPTER XXI.

OUTSIDE in the hall the noise suddenly subsided. Fernandez's followers realized that whoever it was behind that great, barred door, he held the winning hand. For was not the secretary to the Provisional President inside, and at the mercy of the beleaguered party?

Below, in the street, the babble of voices kept up. It was not loud enough, however, to attract the attention of the police, for he is a bold man indeed who falls into the clutches of the law in Mexico City in these troubled times.

Inside the room, Wilson directed Pedro to attend to the secretary's wound. The reporter bade the Mexican stanch the flow of blood and bind up the hurt, the result of a cruel stab made in Fernandez's side. Pedro lifted the secretary and laid him on a couch, then busied himself according to the young American's instructions.

After her first fright had passed, Constance drew some of the bedding about her and seated herself on the edge of the bed.

The reporter walked up close to the door. He called to those in the hall, speaking in English, as he felt sure that some of them would understand.

"Your leader is wounded," he cried. "If any attempt is made to get into this room, either by you in the hall or the others of you outside in the street, your leader will be slain without mercy."

As Wilson stopped speaking, he heard the low hum of voices through the door. He then heard some one walk rapidly away. The murmur of voices continued. Presently the babble which had been sounding from the street below ceased. The reporter judged that his message had been conveyed to those outside the castle, and he was right.

After the passage of a few minutes Wilson was accosted by a well-modulated voice from the hallway. Whoever it was speaking, he showed a working knowledge of the English language.

"Senor," said the voice, "if you will deliver our leader to us, we will give you safe conduct from the castle."

To this proposition the American did not deign to answer. He knew what the promise was worth—that it was worth nothing.

Many times before, in his comparatively short life, the reporter had been called upon to think rapidly. But never had his mind worked with the lightninglike rapidity that it did for the next few moments. He knew that the only hope for them lay in cutting their way out of the castle either by strategy or battle; he knew that though he might have in his power the leader of the enemy, this advantage was not so great as might at first be supposed. Undoubtedly, the fact that Fernandez was in his power might stave off attack for a little while, but even the life of the secretary would be sacrificed by his followers rather than allow the escape of the hated Americanos.

These things darted through the mind of Wilson in much less time than it takes to tell of them. The young man had almost to admit that he was in a trap from which there was no escaping; almost, but not quite, he admitted this—that he was doomed to die pent in these gloomy old walls behind which so many evil things had happened. But the young American determined to escape from the Castle La Garcia, taking Constance Clemmins with him, or die in the attempt. The girl sat dazed and frightened.

Standing there by the door, his mind beaten by the winds of doubt and determination, the young man conceived his daring plan, though he did not know the web that Fate was spinning outside.

* * * * *

The Asteroid, Peachy Lincoln at the levers, and Ebenezer Tootwhistle seated securely behind him, darted out of Cicero Field. Up, up she soared, until she seemed but a black speck in a field of blue; then Mr. Peachy Lincoln pointed the nose of his flying machine southwestward, and to those few who stood by the Asteroid's hangar to watch her begin her memorable journey along the stellar ways, she soon was lost in the hazy heavens. All of which was nothing new to Mr. Lincoln. But to Ebenezer Tootwhistle it was a decidedly new, not to say hair-raising, experience; or, rather, it would have lifted his hair had there been any hirsute adornment where that commodity generally grows on the head of the human animal. As it was, Tootwhistle's scalp prickled and tingled as it had never prickled and tingled before. Ebenezer, well wrapped in voluminous coats and waistcoats, skull caps, and the like, hung on to his moorings for dear life and gasped for breath. But never for an instant did Tootwhistle harbor the idea of giving up the trip.

To the little detective as he gazed downward, the world quickly became a wide and splotched carpet that swept backward from under the splendid man-made ship of the aerial sea, as the swaying ocean sweeps from under the keel of some leviathan of the deep. But the speed of the Asteroid was incalculably greater than that of anything which clings to the face of the world. The mightiest mogul on slender threads of steel was but a snail beside her. She fled down the sky like a hunted thing, a hunted thing whom the gods had vowed to track down among the stars.

As for Mr. Peachy Lincoln—on the ground he was a very commonplace sort of individual, slangy, smoking innumerable Turkish cigarettes, which should have barred him from the ordinary ways of men. Automobiles and flying machines have developed two new types, and they are not dissimilar. There are many things in common between the chauffeur and the birdman, and they are chiefly noted for an absolute lack of fear and a dare-deviltry which in the old times found expression along the Spanish Main and the open road.

In the air Mr. Peachy Lincoln was far from being just an ordinary man who used much slang and smoked many cigarettes. He became a superman who pitted his brain and brawn against the senseless currents which sweep endlessly over the world. The flight was to be a hurried one, should Tootwhistle prove hardy enough for such a voyage. And he did so prove. Food in plenty the two men had stored ready-prepared and hung in two bags suspended from the framework of the airship. In the pockets of his great overcoat Tootwhistle had stored other things, perilous things, for bombs are considered among the most dangerous of man's handiwork.

Through three days the monoplane, flying at tremendous speed, journeyed toward the City of Mexico. Then, as dusk fell on the evening of the third day, the aeronauts beheld a huge smudge of smoke which they knew to be the eternal covering of the Mexican capital.

At the edge of the city Mr. Peachy Lincoln brought the Asteroid to earth, as directed by Tootwhistle. Only for a moment was the little detective undecided as to his whereabouts. His accurate knowledge of nearly every known spot on the habitable globe stood him in good stead. Tootwhistle crawled stiffly out of the car.

"I think that it will be better for you to stay here, Mr. Lincoln, while I enter the city and seek out a certain innkeeper known to me," said the little man to his companion. "This innkeeper will put us up; he is an Englishman whom I have known for many years. We must be very careful, for Americans are not exactly welcomed in the City of Mexico just now. The innkeeper can have the machine brought to a place of safety for us. Eh? What?"

"Suits me," answered the birdman, laconically, after which he lit a cigarette and looked off toward the lights of the city a few hundred yards away.

"Then wait until you hear from me," said Tootwhistle.

Peeling off an overcoat, the overcoat in the pockets of which rested those four bombs, quiet now, but destined soon to be noisy enough to plunge a city into turmoil, the little man laid the garment carefully across the framework of the air machine. Then he walked rapidly away.

For the reason that we can see men smoking Turkish cigarettes almost any day, we will leave Mr. Peachy Lincoln, and follow the footsteps of Ebenezer Tootwhistle, who rapidly made his way into the town.

CHAPTER XXII.

WITH his bent and shriveled figure muffled up in the long cape which he had worn under his overcoat, Tootwhistle made his way through the streets toward the hotel kept by his English friend. His way lay close alongside the old Castle La Garcia. The detective passed the historic pile unnoting, save for a casual glance. The Castle La Garcia was nothing new to him. He had been over it many times. Ebenezer Tootwhistle had been over most things in this world many times. He differed from most men in that he rarely went over the same ground again. The detective made his way to the hotel and entered.

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another guest had registered. This guest was destined to be greatly astounded soon after finishing his dinner and as he sat smoking a fragrant cigar in the hotel lobby.

When Tootwhistle entered the front door of the hotel, the other man started visibly. He could not see the little consulting detective's face. "But is it possible," he thought, "that another man in the world walks in just the way Ebenezer walks?"

On his way to the hotel desk, Tootwhistle marched up close to the other man. Marvin Dannett leaped to his feet.

"By the Lord Harry, Ebenezer Tootwhistle!" he exclaimed.

Tootwhistle turned and surveyed Dannett calmly.

"Dannett, eh?" he half queried and half stated. No one had ever been able to surprise Ebenezer Tootwhistle, or at least to make him show surprise. Besides, Tootwhistle had more than half suspected that he would find Marvin Dannett in Mexico City; that was what had brought him on the long journey. Simply because he had found him so soon was no occasion for excitement to the little man. That Dannett was stopping at the hotel of Tootwhistle's English friend was a bit unusual, but so is life unusual, and no one knew this better than Ebenezer Tootwhistle. Perhaps Tootwhistle, with many another man, thanked the gods that now and then the unusual thing comes to pass, else would life grow stale and flat with infinite uniformity.

Dannett accompanied his friend to the desk, where Tootwhistle talked briefly with the proprietor. Then the consulting detective declared in favor of a warm dinner, despite the waiting Peachy Lincoln. Dannett went with his friend into the diningroom, and there over his cigar related how after reaching Vera Cruz in company with Fenning, the Clarion-Intelligencer's correspondent, he had secured passage into the capital on a Government train because of an acquaintanceship with the conductor. Dannett frankly explained the purpose of his visit, though Tootwhistle needed no explanation. To his acute mind that story in the Clarion-Intelligencer had been a splendid lead. Now he wanted to know how the quest would end.

Finishing his dinner, Tootwhistle was provided by his friend, the proprietor, with four men to bring the Asteroid under the cover of the great garage behind the hotel. The little detective asked Dannett if he cared to accompany them. The invitation was accepted.

While Henry Wilson and Pedro had been effecting an entrance into the basement of the old Castle La Garcia, Ebenezer Tootwhistle had been eating his first warm dinner for two days.

Tootwhistle was leading Dannett and his party of workmen back to the spot where he had left Mr. Peachy Lincoln. They were just approaching the Castle La Garcia when the noise of fighting assailed their ears. The men from the hotel promptly fled, leaving the Americans to satisfy their curiosity if they cared to do so.

For a moment the two Americans were tempted to follow on the heels of the Mexicans, but curiosity got the better of them. They drew closer to the castle. As they walked cautiously forward, it seemed to flash over the minds of both of the men that here might be the end of their quest.

"The bombs and the machine!" gasped Tootwhistle in the other's ear. "They'll help, eh, Dannett?"

"What do you mean?" asked his companion.

"Dannett," whispered the dried-up little old fellow, "Dannett, demme, we must get 'em out. Eh? I've got an airship—Peachy Lincoln—four bombs—Dannett and Tootwhistle—eh? Well, what power in the world could stop us? Eh?"

The little man spoke in a nervous, rapid croak.

"You stay here, Dannett," he went on. "I'll go and find Lincoln and those bombs, and I'll get back here as quickly as I can; then something'll happen, Dannett; something'll happen, sure as you are born, or I'm not Ebenezer Tootwhistle. The fun'll begin, eh, Dannett?

"Keep close to where you are. Better still, don't move from your tracks if you can help it, Dannett. I'll be back in a jiffy. You wouldn't want to be in the wrong place when one of those bombs exploded—they're powerful, I can tell you."

Loosing Dannett's arm, Tootwhistle turned, and half walking and half running he went toward the spot where he had left Mr. Lincoln and his air machine. The pace was of a surprising swiftness for Ebenezer Tootwhistle.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IT SEEMS a harebrained thing to do, but desperate straits demand desperate measures," thought the reporter, as he stood by the door, sword in hand, and listened to the low murmur of voices outside in the hall.

What Wilson proposed to do was this: He had noted that though the barred windows of the apartment were of sufficient strength to withstand the efforts of one man, they were old and rusty withal, and might yield to the combined efforts of Pedro and himself. He and the guide would tear loose some of the bars. After this they would improvise a rope from the bedding in the room, and by means of it they could lower the girl into the street. After this they could themselves climb down the rope and join her. The three of them could make their way to the Ruiz home, remaining there until the next day, when they could make their escape from the city concealed in the hay wagon.

If only the girl could be lowered to the street before they were apprehended, she would have to take her chances at finding the Ruiz home, according to directions. Wilson thought that even if this should prove to be the case, he and Pedro might be able to cut their way out of the castle.

The reporter crossed over to where Constance was seated. Pedro had just finished dressing the wound of the unconscious Fernandez, and Wilson called to him. The reporter outlined his plan to the two of them. Immediately Wilson and the guide began their work of tying the rope together, and this gave the girl an opportunity to slip behind the head of the bed where she could make her toilet in comparative privacy.

Outside in the hallway there was no sound, save now and then the soft shuffling of feet. Wilson and the guide worked with feverish haste. They both knew that time was precious. The silence of those outside the door told of grim preparation of some sort. The reporter and Pedro felt that in a few minutes a desperate assault would be made.

Having tied together the makeshift rope, the two men laid hold on the iron bars of the window. The ordeal taxed their strength, but they tore one bar from its moorings in the wall and laid hold on another.

As the men were straining at the second bar, Fernandez returned to consciousness. The backs of the reporter and the guide were turned toward the couch on which the secretary lay, and as Constance was behind the head of the bed, none of the three saw the Mexican when he opened his eyes and gazed about the room. The face of the secretary was deadly pale. He managed to pull himself into a sitting posture on the edge of the couch. Then he got shakily to his feet. His sword lay a few feet away on the floor. Swaying with weakness, the secretary made his way to it and picked the weapon up. Then he began creeping soundlessly toward the two working men.

Behind the head of the bed Constance completed her dressing. She stepped out into the room just as Fernandez was creeping toward her two rescuers. The girl screamed. Startled, the secretary whirled upon her. The next moment he lay stretched on the floor, unconscious again from a blow dealt him by the reporter.

Again the noise outside broke loose, again there was the sound of running feet about the corridors.

Wilson and Pedro bound and gagged the secretary.

"Lower the senorita," whispered the reporter to the other.

At that moment the whole upper section of the great door opening out upon the hall was crushed by a huge beam which the besiegers were using as a catapult. Evidently in their period of silence the Mexicans had brought the beam from below. One of them tried to climb through the hole in the wrecked door. Wilson sprang across the room, grasping his sword as he sped by the table. The American ran the man through the breast. With a sobbing sigh the Mexican collapsed and hung half in and half out of the entrance. Another Mexican tried to climb in over his slain companion's body.

Outside in the street there was a sound of a tremendous explosion. The walls of the castle swayed as before the breath of a great blast. Wilson lunged out at the second Mexican and buried the point of his weapon in the man's throat. Arterial blood, vividly crimson, gushed out, and the man reaching out, fell across the body of his companion. The reporter whirled around in time to see the top of Pedro's head disappearing below the edge of the window. He ran over to the window and peered out; his heart gave a great bound of joy, he shouted aloud, and laying hold on the rope, he began sliding down, just as the guide's feet touched the ground.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHEN Ebenezer Tootwhistle left Dannett, he dashed away as fast as his crooked little legs could carry him, and in less than five minutes' time he stood panting before Mr. Peachy Lincoln and his redoubtable Asteroid. Mr. Lincoln was just lighting another short, thick cigarette when Tootwhistle brought himself to a precipitate standstill.

"For the love o'——" ejaculated Mr. Peachy Lincoln, when he was cut in upon by the little detective with:

"For the love of nothing! Get into that airship, and hold yourself in readiness to make an ascent the minute I get back here."

Mr. Peachy Lincoln inhaled smoke calmly, crawled into the car, and answered:

"Righto, this is your funeral and your tea party."

Ebenezer caught up his overcoat from where it hung across the framework of the flying machine. He dived into its capacious pockets and extracted two high-power bombs. He raced back the way he had come.

Just as Tootwhistle returned to the spot where he had left Marvin Dannett, Constance's scream sounded out through the night from the upper window. Almost immediately ten or a dozen members of the palace guard rushed out of the castle and surrounded the basement door.

At that moment Ebenezer Tootwhistle had the most brilliant thought of his career. For an instant, when he saw the guardsmen rushing pell-mell out of the castle, he was tempted to cast a bomb among them. Following close upon this impulse came the thought that it was likely that those in that upper room would seek to make their escape by crawling out of the window. He therefore determined to hold his fire until the instant when some of the trapped Americans should make their appearance. The bomb would then cover their escape wholly.

Just as Constance reached the ground, and while Pedro was halfway down the rope, Ebenezer cast his first bomb. While the reporter was sliding down, the little detective threw the other one. The whole castle rocked under the shock of the explosions. The mangled bodies of Mexicans cluttered the basement entrance; the whole doorway was wrecked, and a great gap was torn in the side of the wall.

Following the throwing of the bombs, the five members of the party, racing at the heels of Tootwhistle, dashed out to where the flying machine and Mr. Peachy Lincoln awaited them. They were not followed. Those about the castle had enough to do just then.

Once beside the airship, Tootwhistle turned to the girl, and in a dry, cracked voice said, "Get in."

Starry-eyed and pale, Constance was about to obey the command. Then she seemed swiftly to reconsider, and turning, she laid her hand on the sleeve of

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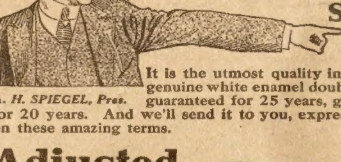
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the reporter, who stood close beside her.

"No," answered the girl; "he came for me, and I am going to stay with him."

"Demmet, stay then!" rasped Tootwhistle.

He was not a man to waste words. He had offered to give the girl his place in the flying machine; she had refused. For what earthly reason the little detective could not know. He was not an adept in romance, but he knew that he had done all that could be expected of him. Besides, his professional curiosity had been satisfied.

"Chicago, Mr. Lincoln," ordered the little man, in the same tone that he would have said "Blackstone Hotel" had he boarded a taxi at State and Madison streets, in the aforesaid city. With a mighty whirring, the Asteroid gathered herself into the sky. She rushed out up the Milky Way. Mr. Peachy Lincoln was young; he had food in his overcoat pockets. What was a little run up to the shores of Lake Michigan, anyway! And little, old, time-defying Ebenezer Tootwhistle, yellow and crooked as a question mark, was gone! The littered desk and the bare room at top of the dark stairway awaited him.

Dannett and the reporter gazed blankly at each other for a moment under the stars. Tootwhistle's departure had been so sudden as to render them almost speechless with amazement. In a few words the detective told the reporter that he had been sent into Mexico to trace him, and that it was only by the rarest of good luck that he had been able to locate him on the very evening of his arrival in the capital. He also explained to the young man how it happened that Tootwhistle was in the city.

With much caution the four members of the party made their way to the Ruiz home, which stands in the Way of the Hungry Heart. They had to pass within a stone's throw of the Castle La Garcia on their return journey, and it seemed to them as if half the capital had gathered there, drawn by the noise of the explosions.

Those two bombs of Tootwhistle had done nothing if they had not thrown the City of Mexico into the throes of a wild excitement. The noise had even awakened the Provisional President from his drunken slumbers. He sat up on the edge of his couch, rubbed his eyes, half suspecting that Villa and Carranza had taken the town. Then, hearing no more, and deciding that it had been only a nightmare, after all, he had grunted, lain down again, and had been regathered into the arms of bacchanal Morpheus.

Old Man Ruiz admitted the members of the American party to his home. His face was white and scared when he came to the door. Like the Provisional President, he was under the impression that the rebels had taken the city.

"Heard you not the terrible noise, senors?" he questioned, in a frightened voice, after he had admitted the party. "Is it not that Carranza and Villa are upon us? Or is it Zapata come out of the South to lay waste to the capital?"

Pedro reassured the old man, telling him that the noise had been caused by an explosion among the munitions stored at the Castle La Garcia.

The members of the party, now including Pedro's brother and father, were soon in a room by themselves, and deep in a discussion of the night's happenings and of plans for the morrow. Ruiz had retired to the company of his senora, that he might, undisturbed, discuss with her the great good luck that had befallen him. His financial fortunes had indeed been improved within the last few hours. The loss of Maximo as a son became one of those dim, far-away sorrows of the past. The curative power of money passeth the curative power of many things, and a well-stocked pantry healeth the sorrowing soul.

Almost the very first words of Constance to Pedro after they had been admitted to the Ruiz home were an inquiry as to whether he believed that there was any possibility of her parents being alive. She was almost overcome with joy when the former servant told her that there was no certainty that they were dead, and that it was possible that they were being held imprisoned for a ransom. The guide explained that the opportunity so to hold the millionaire and his wife would have been considered as a rare stroke of good fortune by any of the members of the mob which dragged them from their carriage on the memorable day when the girl herself had been hauled off to the Castle La Garcia.

"But alas, I am not sure," said Pedro.

And the girl fell to weeping softly, despite the fact that she had believed that her miserable days in the old castle had dried up her fountain of tears. The reporter tried to comfort her with cheering words, and partly succeeded. Constance had great faith in this young man who had dared so much for her sake.

From the first moment when he had burst into the room where she was held captive, the reporter had thought that she was the most beautiful woman that he had ever seen. Perhaps he was not far wrong, for Constance was possessed of remarkable loveliness. The manner in which she had clung to him during the short time since her rescue touched the newspaper man deeply. But he was a man of too much innate delicacy to attempt to presume on the unusual situation in which he found himself and her. Wilson knew that however deeply in love he might fall with the girl, it was hardly probable that she, the daughter of a multi-millionaire, and able from her position in the social world to pick and choose whom she would, would allow herself to be captured by a mere newspaper reporter, whose salary would hardly keep her in shoes. The fact that he had dared death in its most horrible forms for her sake did not occur to the young man as an excuse for feeling that he had any special claims on Constance's affections. Wilson reasoned, or would have reasoned had he had time since he met the girl, that any other clean-living, right-thinking American would have acted in just the manner in which he had acted. He would have thought that there was nothing unusual in his hazardous trip across the revolution-torn country to rescue the girl from a captivity which bade fair to be worse than death.

It was with considerable misgivings that the young man realized these things, as he sat and talked to the girl, trying to comfort her. He was selfish enough to dread the unpleasantness of a hopeless love. But he was also unselfish enough to harbor no thought of deserting the girl in her time of need. Yet he felt that heartache might be his during the years to come.

Pedro's mind was busied with quite other matters. More than once recently the guide had wondered whether or not John K. Clemmins and his wife were still alive. As he sat and talked to the daughter of his former master, Pedro determined that he would remain in the city and search for his master and mistress. After Constance had reluctantly entered her bedroom—the one room which had been reserved for privacy—Pedro told the reporter of his determination.

"Senor," he said, "I think that it would be well for me to remain here and search for Senor Clemmins and his wife. This city is as plain as the palm of my hand to me. If they are alive and here, Pedro will learn of it. If I am but given time, I will learn. My father can go to guide you and the Senorita Constance on your return journey to Vera Cruz."

To this plan the reporter readily agreed. It was decided that he, Constance, and Pedro's father would leave the city the next day concealed in the load of hay. After the wagon had once got out of the city, the driver could give his place to Pedro's father, and the road ahead would probably be comparatively clear.

Constance Clemmins sought sleep in vain. Her mind was a medley of many things. First was the ever-present wonder as to whether her father and mother were still alive; then there was the great thanksgiving that she was out of the dreadful Castle La Garcia. Moreover, there was the thought of this wonderful new man who had come to her across the mountains, who had come into her life in such an unusual manner. It all seemed very strange to the girl, these happenings of the last few weeks. To her it was more like a page torn out of the famous old book of the Arabian Nights than it was like twentieth-century life. Less than a month ago she had been the happiest member of a very happy family. Wealth and love, with all their attendant pleasures, were at her feet without the asking. Tonight it seemed that she was utterly alone in the world, save for one of her father's former servants and the young reporter. Neither her father nor mother had any relatives. Truly, mused the girl, mundane affairs were not to be depended upon. Many times Constance thought of these things, and each time her mind traveled a trail back to Henry Wilson's mouth and eyes. The girl had never known a pair of eyes and a mouth that so stuck in her memory.

As they had sat together talking before she had come to her room, Wilson had told the girl that he was a newspaper reporter; he had related how Pedro had come to him before his tent in Vera Cruz, and how deeply he had been stirred by that call for aid. Constance wondered if all reporters were like Wilson. If they were, thought the girl, they were decidedly worth cultivating. Then, at last, she fell asleep.

The girl was dreaming of Wilson's mouth and eyes when she was awakened by some one violently shaking her shoulder. She looked up into the ashen and frightened face of the Senora Ruiz. Constance heard a loud pounding up toward the front of the house.

"The soldiers, the soldiers!" cried Senora Ruiz, in a frightened, low voice.

Constance sprang out of bed and began dressing rapidly.

The continuation of this thrilling story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

* * *

Bridal Superstitions.

Many and curious are the customs regarding brides. In Switzerland the bride on her wedding day will permit no one, not even her parents, to kiss her upon the lips:

"'Tis the lips of a bride on her wedding day
That belong to her husband forever and aye,
But if bad luck decrees, she's given a kiss,
The devil may change her from Mrs. to Miss!"

In parts of rural England the cook pours hot water over the threshold after the bridal couple have gone in order to keep it warm for another bride.

The popular custom of throwing the slipper originated in France. An old woman seeing the carriage of her young King—Louis XIII.—passing on the way from church where he had just been married, took off her shoe and, flinging it at the coach, cried out: "'Tis all I have, your majesty, but may the blessings of God go with it."

There is an old superstition in Germany against marriages in May.

A favorite wedding day in Scotland is December 31st, so that the young couple can leave their old life with the old year and begin their married life with the new one.

The Italians permit no wedding gifts that are sharp or pointed. Connected with which practice is the general superstition that the gift of a knife severs friendships. One beautiful marriage custom is that of the bride immediately after the ceremony flinging her bouquet among her maiden friends. She who catches it is destined to be the next bride.

* * *

His Suggestion.

A pompous city official upon reaching his home one evening found the street blockaded and a heap of earth piled against his doorstep. Observing a workman wielding his shovel in a near by ditch, he accosted a passing policeman and complained that the laborer was trespassing upon private property.

"What do yez mean by throwin' dirt on th' gintleman's steps?" demanded the officer, pompously.

"Sure, an' there's no other place t' throw it, d'ye mind!" replied the workman, indifferently.

"Well, thin, in thot case, yez had better dig another hole and trow it in there."

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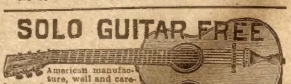

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Side Show Sidelights

By Francis Metcalfe

Snake and Man.

"THAT is a great performance of Brandu's," said the press agent, "but it profits us nothing, because the best part of it cannot be shown to the public. I never see a snake fed without thinking of something which happened when I was running a side show with the greatest show on earth.

"You know that the dime museum business was run to death while the craze lasted in this country, and freaks got so common that you couldn't throw a stone in the streets of any large city without hitting one of 'em. When the fickle public tired of giving up its dimes to see 'em, a guy named Merritt and myself had a choice collection on hand, and we went on the road with the big show for the summer, thinking perhaps our business would pick up in the fall. Our two great attractions were the biggest boa constrictor in captivity, which we called 'Jointless Jake,' and the heaviest fat man in the world. That snake was about two hundred feet long, and while the fat man wasn't much on length, he held the record for belt measurement. Nine hundred and twenty-seven pounds he weighed, as we demonstrated on our own scales at every performance. Their feed bill was quite an item, as the snake took a half dozen sheep every two weeks, and the fat man, who was billed as 'Signor Adipose Avoirdupois'—Merritt invented that—needed about a side of beef every day.

"Freaks are a jealous lot, and as hard to manage as rival prima donnas, and these two monstrosities came to hate each other like poison. They were in different lines, but you may have noticed that the side show 'professor' uses up most of the superlatives in the English language when he gives his lecture, and each of 'em seemed afraid that the other would get some of his share of the dictionary. Adipose used to look at Jake's coiled body as if he would like to sit on it and flatten it out, and the snake would return the glance with a naughty little twinkle in its eye, as if he was estimating how much it would have to stretch its skin to accommodate A. A. in its interior, until it made Merritt anxious about 'em.

"'That blame fat fool will waste away and spoil his shape, if he don't stop worrying,' he says, and he cuts a lot of his talk out of the description of the snake and uses the words on Adipose. Maybe you think snakes are stupid, but they aren't, and the boa got the hump and refused to uncoil himself to show his length unless he got his full share of the spiel. It cheered Avoirdupois up, though, and when we moved to the next town he stood around to gloat over Jake when he was being moved from the traveling box to the exhibition cage. The snake hadn't been fed for ten days and he was good and lively, as well as being out of temper, so when he caught sight of the signor he scattered the boys with one flip of his tail and went for him.

"I've heard of bear hugs, but I never saw such a squeezing as that boa gave poor Adipose. It was a long way around him, but the snake made about a dozen wraps, and all we could see of the fat man was a pair of feet sticking at one end of the coil, and his face, which looked like a purple harvest moon, projecting from the other. Jake reaches out and gets hold of a tent peg with his tail, which gives him a purchase, and then he tightens up for fair and Adipose lets out a holler you could hear a mile.

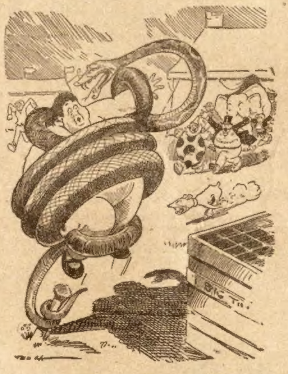
"Of course, we got busy with crowbars and jackscrews and tried to pry Jake off, but there was nothing doing, and the harder we pried the closer he cinched up on Adipose. Merritt usually had a suggestion to make, so I looked at him and he was lost in thought, but in a minute he brightens up and calls for a rope.

"'We can't pry the blame snake away from the man,' says he, as he tied the rope around the signor's feet, 'so we'll try to pull the man away from the snake.' All hands fell to and pulled to beat four of a kind, but Jake just tightened up a bit and grinned, and Adipose let out another holler.

"'You need a traction engine on that rope,' says I, when they gave it up as a bad job, and Merritt, who was looking a little discouraged, gave a whoop.

"'Bring an elephant,' he yelled, and when one of the boys started off on a run for the menagerie, he called after him to 'make that order two elephants.' The Hathis came lumbering over and Merritt tied the rope around the shoulders of one and put another rope around Jake's neck and the shoulders of the other elephant.

"'Now pull, blame you!' says he, heading 'em in different directions and giving one of 'em a kick, and they put their shoulders against the ropes. It was a mighty interesting performance to every one but Adipose, who didn't seem to enjoy it at all, judging from the yells he let out. Jake was having the time of his life, and the harder the elephants pulled the tighter he squeezed the signor, and when he felt that they were getting the better of him he made a supreme effort which kinked up every muscle in his body. But there was no holding on against those brutes and pretty soon the fat man commenced to slip out from the coils, feet first. It was a queer thing to watch and his legs stretched so that I thought his knees would never come into sight. His legs had been about the size of barrels when the snake grabbed him, but between the stretching and the squeezing, they were now three times as long and about as large as broomsticks. He weighed as much as ever when the elephants finally got him out, but the flesh was distributed differently, and instead of being six feet tall and twelve feet around, he was twelve feet long and built in proportion. The snake was up against it, too, for he had cramped himself so with that last squeeze that he couldn't straighten out the kinks, and he kept in the same shape as when he was wrapped around the signor. We tried to straighten him out, but it was no use; he just stayed coiled up like a spring and the boys rolled him around as if he were a barrel.



"He tightens up, and Adipose lets out a holler."

"Merritt had kept cheerful as long as there was anything to be done, but tears came to his eyes when he looked at Adipose. The signor was standing up, gazing at his feet, which he hadn't seen before in twenty years, and Merritt looked up at him and freed his mind.

"'You're a blame fine figure of a fat man, aren't you?' says he. 'Just on account of your confounded professional jealousy we lose our two star attractions, for that blamed snake is so kinked up that he isn't good for anything except to cut up into barrel hoops.'

"The signor was ashamed of himself and hadn't a word to say, so he just kept quiet and tried to get used to his new shape and taking a bird's eye view of things. Merritt and I were feeling pretty blue when along comes Tody Hamilton, the circus press agent, and as soon as he saw what had happened he made a run for a trolley car.

"Don't let 'em get away!' he yelled back over his shoulder. 'This is the largest scoop on record and I'm off for the printing office.'

"'It'll make a good story, all right; but where do we come in on it?' says Merritt, looking mournfully at Adipose.

"Well, a couple of hours later I had to go into the city to order some new togs for the signor, who looked as if he were dressed in a particularly baggy bathing suit since he had been stretched out, and the first thing I saw was a procession of sandwich men marching down the street. The ink wasn't dry on the posters, but Tody had been busy and there in flaming red letters was the announcement:

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Next week's story in this series of funny tales of side shows and circus life will be a laughable account of a negro who was disguised and caged as a man-eating cannibal. Read it. There will be a lot of these circus stories. Don't miss them.

Not a Call.

"You've heard a lot of stories about the fool mistakes women make when they come to a bank," says a well-known paying teller, "and some of them are true.

"I've seen 'em all—the woman who gets mad when we call her attention to an overdraft, and then wants to write a check to make it up; the woman whose indorsements are weird—all of them.

"But the worst came in a few weeks ago. She shoved a check through the window without looking at me. I said:

"'Madam, you will have to get somebody to introduce you before I can cash this check for you.'

"'Sir!' she answered, haughtily, 'I am here on business and not making a social call. I do not care to know you.'"

Her Objection.

From the following story it would seem that the cadets at West Point are not the only persons who sometimes find taps and the sunrise gun annoying.

The wife of one of the officers there had a colored maid who was giving satisfaction and was apparently well pleased with her position. Mrs. Brown was, therefore, amazed when Sallie came to her and told her she could not work there any longer.

"Will you tell me why you are leaving, Sallie?" her mistress asked.

"Mis' Lizzie," she answered, "Ah likes you, an' Ah likes de Kunnel, an' Ah likes de chillen. But Ah can't stay nowhar Ah has to be drummed to bed at night an' shot out of bed in de mawnin'."

The Dub.

"I am told," said a beautiful woman to a dub of a man in Bratenahl the other day, "that my lovely cousin, Miss X, has made a deep impression on you."

"Is Miss X your cousin?" burbled the dub, excitedly. "Indeed she did. She is one of the loveliest girls I ever met. I'll tell you just what kind of a hit she made with me. I met her at the Dashs' dinner, and she sat on the other side of me, and I talked with her the whole time, and I can't even remember who my dinner partner was!"

"I thought not," said the beautiful woman, dryly. "I was your dinner partner!"

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WANTED SOLDIERS' HOMESTEADS Union soldiers who homesteaded less than 160 acres before June 23, 1874, are entitled to additional rights, even though entry was relinquished or abandoned. If soldier is dead, widows or heirs have his rights. I pay spot cash for these claims. Cash paid for names of pensioners. (Comrade) W. E. MOSES, Room 685, First Nat. Bank Bldg., Denver, Colorado.

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$1. WORK SHIRTS
Insist On This Name on Label
Perfect Fit To Every Man
The Most Roomy

Take Your Choice.

Student—"What is pessimism?"
Philosopher—"The faith of cowards."
"Then what is optimism?"
"The faith of fools."

AFTER VACATION.

Folks tell us we're "brown as a berry"
When we finally get back to town.
Will some one please rise and inform us
Just what kind of berries are brown?

YES, HE KNEW HOW!

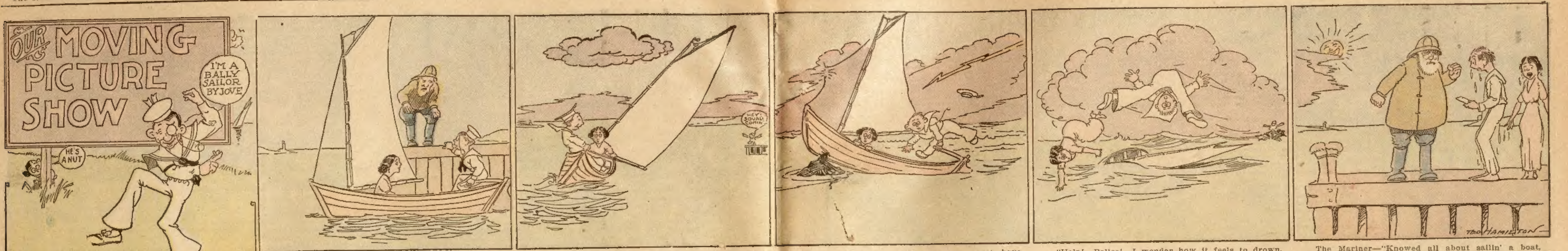
DEAR GIRLS.

"Jack said that I was just as sweet
As sugar!" Cora cried.
"As powdered sugar, I presume,"
Friend Josephine replied."

His Record Clear.

Old Lady—"My friend, are you a Christian?"

Beggar—"Well, mum, no one has ever accused me of workin' on Sunday."



Reggie Bragg—"Do I know how to sail a boat? What do you think I hired this for? Eh, wot?

"The idea of that old souse asking such a question! I'll show these yaps a thing or two about sailing!

"Wow! What was that? Gee, we must have struck a snag! Ouch! that boom swatted me in the neck!

"Help! Police! I wonder how it feels to drown, and if there really is such a place as h—l!"

The Mariner—"Knowed all about sailin' a boat, did ye? Couldn't weather a little puff o' wind like that! Now, ding gast yer liver, ye pay fer that boat!"

A Heavenly Match.

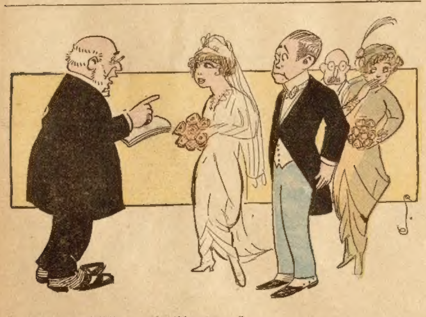
Husband (irritably)—"It isn't a year since you said you believed our marriage was made in heaven, and yet you order me around as if I wasn't anybody."

Wife (calmly)—"Order is heaven's first law."

Early Hours.

City Boarder (at farmhouse)—"Do you still use candles here?"

Mr. Hayseed—"No, siree. In the winter we use a lamp. Don't need it in summer, you know. It's bedtime before it gits dark."



Clergyman—"Will you take this man——"

Miss Shopper (badly flustered)—"Er, yes—send him up to the house, please, and charge him to pa!"

A Reasonable Request.

Jinks—"Phew! Looks like rain."

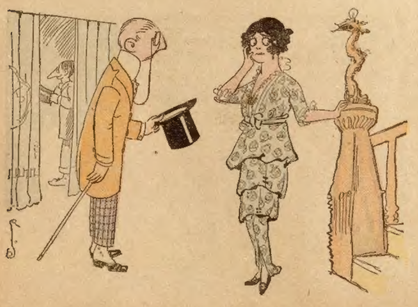
Winks—"We're going to have a thunder shower."

Jinks—"Guess that's so. Lend me one of my umbrellas, will you?"

He Was Glad.

Wife—"Are you glad to see me back?"

Husband—"Indeed I am. I have bought you a new cook book, so that you can get up a grand supper to welcome yourself."



Percy Pinfeather—"I met my friend, Harold Hollownut, at the club, so I brought him up to call."

Polly Pickles—"That's always the way; one thing brings up another."

Freezing Them Out.

Coal Operator—"We're just giving the public what they deserve for their sympathy with the miners—a freeze-out."

Business Man—"But are you not injuring your trade by holding back the coal, switching it off on sidetracks?"

Coal Operator—"Not much. If we hurried large quantities of coal to market, prices would come down, because every retailer would have more than enough to supply the demand. Now, for sixty tons of coal, at prevailing rates, we get about $480. This sum would buy eighty tons if we sold for $6 a ton, and then we would be $160 out of pocket."

Business Man—"Ah! Now I comprehend how the mine owners are making money on the freeze-out."

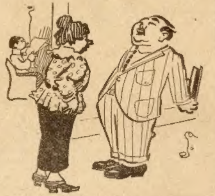
Replenishing a Wardrobe.

She (coaxingly)—"Your little wife is very anxious to see her mother again."

He—"Yes, of course—er—very natural."

She—"I cannot go to visit her, you know, without a complete new traveling outfit, and a few new dresses for extra occasions; but if you feel very poor, my love, I can stay at home and have mother come here, you know."

He—"Poor! Nonsense! I'm making money right along. Here's a check."



The Caller—"You say your son dislikes the country and wants to go to the city. Does he seem restive at home?"

Mrs. Tungtwist—"Yes; he's awful restive. He ain't done nothin' but rest since he graduated from college."

A HAMMOCK DISASTER.

We were seated in the hammock
One nice balmy night in June,
When the earth was hushed in slumber
'Neath the beauty of the moon.
I had asked one little question,
And my heart was filled with hope;
But the answer never reached me,
For her brother cut the rope.

Comforts of a Home.

Summer Boarder—"Why did you wake me up and hustle me downstairs at this unearthly hour?"

Farmer Wayback—"That other boarder is goin' fishin', and has to get away early."

"What has that to do with me?"

"You had the towel."

The Quick and the Dead.

Citizen (with poor memory)—"I should like the present address of the Honorable Mr. Greatmann."

Newspaper Office Boy—"Next door to th' right."

"Thank you. For whom shall I inquire?"

"Th' obituary editor."

THE GREEN AND GOLD WEDDING.

The meat grows tough and tougher,
And the boarders have to suffer
On the farm,
And they view the hundred pickles,
And the jam that gently trickles,
With alarm.

The butter's rather salty,
And the bread a trifle faulty,
That's the way!
And it's rather heavy sledding
Till the green and golden wedding
Saves the day.

When the sweet corn comes, all golden,
Every boarder to embolden
To be rash,
For it certainly is prime, ah!
When it weds the tender lima—
Succotash!

He Won Her.

She—"Some persons claim that they cannot look from a height without wishing to cast themselves down. Did you ever have that feeling, Mr. Yearnsm?"

He—"Once."

"Indeed? And where were you?"

"I was in an elevated car, and I saw you in the street."

A Money-Saving Device.

Mr. de Broker—"The bills my wife sends me from the summer resorts are ruinous."

Mr. de Sharp—"My wife didn't remain away two weeks."

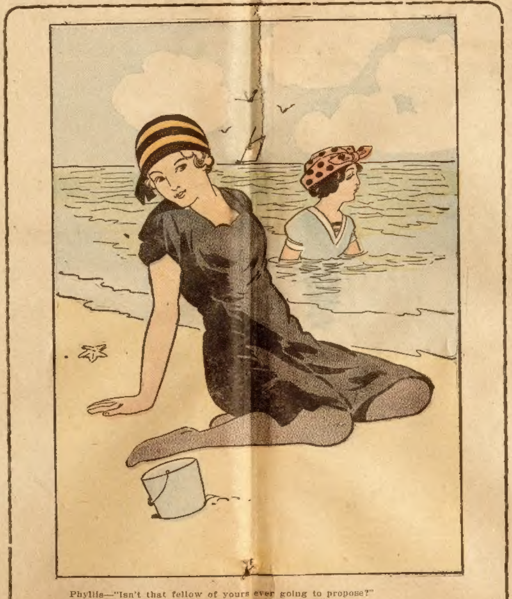
"Eh? How did you manage it?"

Hired a fellow to typewrite my letters to her, and scented the paper with violet."

A Sliding Scale.

Lone Arrival (at summer resort)—"What are your terms here?"

Hotel Clerk—"Uh—you will have to wait until the through express gets in. If it is loaded, our terms will be $10 a day. If it is empty we will pay you 25 cents an hour to sit on the porch and look happy."



Phyllis—"Isn't that fellow of yours ever going to propose?"
Philomena—"I guess not; he's like an hour glass."
Phyllis—"How's that?"
Philomena—"The more time he gets the less sand he has at the top."

A Scientific Fact.

Editor—"Here's a curious thing I found in an exchange, and printed in my paper yesterday, though I don't know whether it is true or not. It says 'A man can't write the word yawning five times without yawning.'"

Friend—"I saw that in your paper yesterday, and tried it. It's true. While writing the word yawning I yawned two or three times."

"Well, that's remarkable, unless you tried it late at night."

"No, I tried it just as soon as I got through reading your paper."

Had Thought It Over.

Agitator—"Do you ever stop to reflect, sir, on the condition of this country?"

Citizen—"I have thought much upon the subject, thought long and deeply."

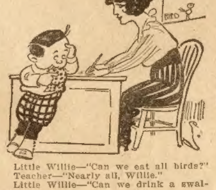
"Ah, I am glad to find there is one besides myself who has given this great subject attention. What, in your opinion, does this country most need at the present time?"

"A fool-killer."

Jinks' Soft Snap.

Winks—"I notice that your barber always talks to you in French. I did not know that you understood that language."

Jinks—"Well, I don't; but you needn't tell him so."



Little Willie—"Can we eat all birds?"
Teacher—"Nearly all, Willie."
Little Willie—"Can we drink a swallow?"

TWO TROUBLES.

I like to fish where willows jut
O'er waters rippling by.
Such scenes are very pleasing, but
The fish are very shy.

The fish are very shy, alas!
Which helps to spoil our day,
And then the bugs, it comes to pass,
Are just the other way.

Business Dull.

Tramp—"Business is very dull, mum."

Farmer's Wife—"Business is dull, is it? I'd just like to know what business you are in."

Tramp—"I'm a professional scarecrow, mum, but nobody seems to need my services this time of year."

Not a Safe Amusement.

Frenchman—"Oui, one grond citee you haf here, but eet ees not Paree. You haf no duels."

Mr. Gotham—"No; you see, most of us are such good shots that we would be liable to hit each other."

Thoroughly Respectable.

Husband—"The idea of buying a hat trimmed with chicken feathers!"

Wife—"These look like chicken feathers, I'll admit, but they are not."

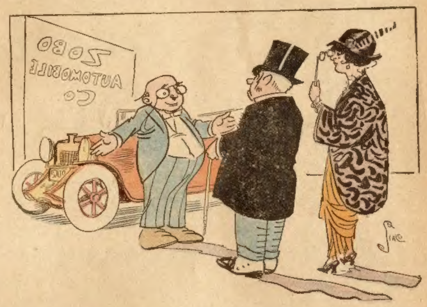
"How do you know?"

"By the price."

Wanted to Oblige, But—

Housekeeper—"If you want anything to eat here, you can just go out there and weed that flower bed for me."

Tattered Tom—"Id like to obleege yeh, mum, but I'm afeared the position would make me pants bag at the knees."



Auto Agent—"This car, complete, with every modern improvement and a copy of the divorce and bankruptcy laws of every State, $2,000!"

A Sad Homecoming.

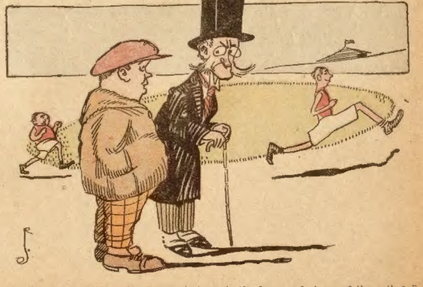
Winks—"What makes Bilkins so glum today?"

Jinks—"He has just returned from a two weeks' vacation in the country, and everybody has been telling him what delightfully cool weather we've been having lately."

No Mosquitoes.

Jinks—"Ho! ho! ho! Nice time you must have in the country! Carrying home about a cartload of mosquito netting, I see."

Winks—"Oh, we have no mosquitoes in Jerseyville, hardly one. This is to—er—keep out butterflies and humming birds."

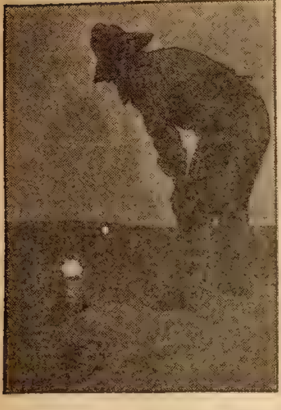


The Coach—"Yes, sir, our track team is the bone and sinew of the college."
The Professor—"Not so very sinewy, but there's enough bone in their heads to make the classification appropriate."

The Gay Girl Mystery

Or, Two Damsels Errant

By Victor Ardmore



A small light was pitching oddly.

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CHAPTER XIII.

THE LAST HOPE.

AMY THELMA felt a hand on her arm and turned to see Mrs. Tilley by her side. The plain, motherly, yet strong, face was composed, and she looked after the men with eager eyes.

"Tresselton will have another bad time,'" she said stoutly.

"He and his men make three to oppose your husband and Mr. Gresham," the girl reminded.

"Landy me! That don't count. Other things do. Wait and see. I know Mr. Gresham has your good wishes."

"He has."

Amy Thelma said it quietly and truthfully. The brief wavering of her confidence in Gresham had disappeared. He had said that all could be explained, and though words were easily spoken, she had been convinced far enough to be willing to await that explanation. As for the trouble with Tresselton, she had seen both men, and that was enough.

Over on the side of the hill wood had been gathered into a heap until the quantity was generous. It was all dry, waste sticks, but at one side were pine boughs, thick and green, ready for the fire when the right time came.

"We will have a smoke so black that it can't fail," said Tresselton, exultantly. "They will be over in an hour after they see it and all I want is enough help. The game is right in my hands, boys. You, Jack, use a match."

"Right you are, mister. Here is the match, here the blaze, and now I'll stick it in the fuel and——"

He stooped to carry out the last part of his plan, but as he did so heavy steps sounded behind him and he was pitched forward into the ragged boughs that were chosen to burn. Before he had disentangeld himself the match had been stamped into the ground, and Gresham stood facing his chief enemy in cold hostility.

"Drop it!" he said briefly.

"What in perdition have you to do with it?" Tresselton snarled.

"You have seen, in part."

"Do you think we will put up with such high-jinks? Do you think——"

"Wait a bit!" interrupted Gresham. "Let us understand each other. This island is private property, and you are intruders here. Your tent will not be molested, but you shall not steal nor waste a thing here. The wood is private property, and you can have none of it to squander. You will light no bonfire!"

At that moment Jack, having managed to crawl out of the heap, presented a scratched and bleeding face and malignant eyes.

"That fire is going to be lit!" he snarled.

"So it is!" Tresselton coincided. "We want it, and we are going to have it."

"Light it, then!" replied Gresham, smiling complacently.

"I will!" declared Jack.

"Go ahead if you wish, but bear this in mind—if you start a blaze you will be thrown into it, and fire will do more than scratch."

Tresselton moved restlessly and eyed his enemies. Tilley had a revolver ready for use, and Gresham's firmness suggested that he was equally well armed. The intruder began to have doubts. Never a fighting man himself, he remembered instances where other men had fought and come to grief, and he suddenly decided that he had rather avoid extreme measures and fall back upon a favorite resort of his—trickery.

"Oh, hang it all!" he said, his words coming with a wolfish snap, "why all this rumpus? Take your old wood and sell it to a beggar, if you want to. Jack, keep your matches in your pocket. But as for you, Mister Man," and he wheeled upon Gresham belligerently, "I will beat you yet. Now, will you take yourself off?"

"Order your men to throw all that wood, dry and green, into the water," Gresham pursued relentlessly.

"I won't throw a blamed stick!" shouted Jack

But he did, for Tresselton directed that it be done, and soon the entire quantity was floating away from the island. It was not so small a setback, for dry wood was not plentiful there.

"We will leave you for now," Gresham then said, "but don't make the mistake of thinking you can do what you please here. Behave yourselves until you go ashore."

He turned and walked away, followed by Tilley.

"Well," remarked the latter, wonderingly, "that was an easy victory."

"It was not a victory," Gresham returned.

"Eh?"

"No. First, because it was an impotent conclusion after I had previously ordered him to leave Long John at once, and secondly, because Tresselton has something up his sleeve that I fail to grasp. The knave is full of resources, and the readiness with which he yielded just now is suspicious. That readiness is full of threat. What has he in mind?"

Tilley shook his head doubtfully.

"When Tresselton seems to yield," Gresham added, "look out for him."

"Maybe one of them is going to swim to the coast."

"It is possible, but hardly to be expected, with the water so rough. Tilley, we have got to be all eyes now. If only Dick Packard was back!"

"He ought to be here a few hours after dark."

"Yet he may not come then, and anyhow, it's a long wait before that time. All we can do, meanwhile, is to have an eye on our enemies, and trust to luck."

"They are inclined to press matters to a finish."

"I wish they were. Better that than this uncertainty. If they would give us excuse for pitching into them, and shutting them up, it would be simple, but wily Tresselton has different aims. Hang it all, hating that man as I do, I feel mortified that I must swallow my own high words and threats and sit idle, but what can I do?"

"We will beat them yet, sir."

"Then pray that Dick Packard comes quickly. Now, Tilley, I want you to stand right here. You can see the men and the water beyond. Watch everything, and if there is mischief doing, come to me."

Tilley answered cheerfully, and Gresham went back to the house alone. He found the women in a state of trepidation, but soon put them a little more at ease.

"Don't worry a bit," was his advice. "We have clear sailing ahead of us, and are going to win. Mark that down!"

Amy Thelma sighed softly. She was beginning to be able to read the master of the Gay Girl a little in certain moods, and she knew his alleged cheerfulness now was assumed. He began to look about the room thoughtfully.

"I hope we shall get away tonight," she said.

"Don't you worry," he directed absently. "Your uncle is not going to capture you."

"My uncle! Oh, then you know about me!" she cried.

Gresham came out of his abstraction quickly.

"I've betrayed myself," he said irritably. "I was day-dreaming and did not think. Well, since it is so, I do know."

"When did you learn?"

"Yesterday."

"I am not sorry. I feel now that I can trust those in this house. If you know all you know that I am Amy Temple, and that I am wanted for wounding my uncle with a pair of scissors."

"Yes," he admitted placidly.

"Let me explain!" was the hurried response. "I am an orphan with some money. Ezekiel Lawson, my uncle, was my guardian until I was of age, and since then he has managed my small property because I unwillingly permitted it. Finally, he claimed that he had a chance to invest my means in a new company of which he was a director. I distrusted the company and him, and refused my permission. He declared that I was mentally unbalanced, and said he would have me sent to an asylum. As a first step he tried to lock me in a room of the house.

"I was frightened and confused, and with his hands on me I used the scissors I was holding. I did inflict a wound upon his head, though not serious, but sight of the trickle of blood scared me more than ever. My good friend Betsey, housekeeper for me, learned that he had gone for officers. We fled together, pursued and hounded, and so we came to the water, where you took us into the Gay Girl. That is my story."

"Can you prove," Gresham asked, "that he tried to thrust you into a room in your own house forcibly?"

"Betsey saw and heard everything."

"Then you need have no fear. He was the assailant, and you did no more than to act in self-defense. You were justified. When matters settle down a trifle you will naturally proceed against him, and believe me, will have no trouble in establishing your innocence. His step was high-handed, and there is the further question whether he was trying to get your money into his clutches for evil purposes."

"I told you then, Miss Amy," said Betsey, "that you ought to consult somebody who knew more of the law than we did."

"Oh, I know, I know," Amy said, sighing, "but time was very short and my one idea was to get away. That wound on his head——"

"Report says it was a mere scratch, and anyhow, were you to be shut up in your own house for such a thing? Just wait, my dear lady, and I will see that justice is done you."

Amy Thelma started forward impulsively and gave him her hand.

"Thank you, thank you!" she exclaimed.

They were on better footing than ever before, but it was not until some time later that the girl remembered that, though her trouble had been discussed, Gresham had revealed nothing of his own. The motor-boat mystery remained unexplained.

The hours passed leaden-footed, the day waned draggingly, and always the alertness was necessarily continued. Until Dick Packard came they could only wait, and they waited, watching Tresselton, wondering what he had in mind. It was a miserable delay, an outward peace as treacherous as Tresselton himself

But the day finally ended and night came.

CHAPTER XIV

AMY THELMA'S FLIGHT.

BLACK clouds rode in the sky, and the wind drove the water until it was no night for pleasure-sailing. On Long John shadows were thick and gloomy, and Tilley, trying to watch Tresselton's party, felt helpless. When the last ray of day dwindled, they had been lying together near a series of thickets. He supposed they were there now, but

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That's because the food is not digested and absorbed. Much that is eaten is never taken up by the system as real food, and so the tissues simply starve and the individual may, as in a recent case, look and feel old in what should be the bloom of life, youth.

"At twenty I was prematurely old. The health and vigor and brightness of youth had been, as it seemed, stolen from me. I went to work in the morning with slow steps and a dull head.

"My work through the day was unsatisfactory for my breakfast lay in my stomach like a hard lump. I was peevish and the gas in my stomach was very annoying. After supper I usually went to bed to toss half the night from sheer nervousness.

"This was all from indigestion—caused by wrong eating.

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DR. J. E. CANNADAY, 1417 Court Block, Sedalia, Mo.

References: Third National Bank, Sedalia Mo. Send this notice to some eczema sufferer

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could not be certain. For more than two hours he had strained his eyes, seeking to prevent the men from crawling away secretly.

With that darkness the odds were against him, and more than once he recalled Gresham's assertion that the chief enemy was master of cunning and treachery. He was still looking when something farther off arrested his attention, and he glanced waterward. What he saw filled him with consternation.

Several hundred feet from shore a small light was pitching oddly, but its meaning swept upon him at once. One of Tresselton's party had crawled away and put a lantern afloat, no doubt using a miniature raft to hold it upright.

The calamity had come—the signal to those on the mainland had been sent adrift in spite of all precautions, and it was a call to the plotter's re-enforcements. Tilley turned and dashed toward the house.

In that section there had been the same anxiety, the same painful watching and waiting. Dick Packard had not come, and the darkness shut out all view except very near by. In this gloomy field they waited, waited, filled with apprehensions, expecting a blow from Tresselton, and not knowing how or when it would fall.

Gresham, for reasons best known to himself, remained always in the house, and several times Mrs. Tilley went upstairs and was invisible for some minutes. Betsey hovered close by Gresham, willing to be protected.

Amy Thelma was strangely free from timidity, and as she knew the need of a patrol immediately outside, she spent most of her time there. Gresham had implored her not to go far, and she intended to obey, but more than once she wandered several hundred feet, and she made a practice of circling the barn and other outbuildings.

Patrolling, she often looked toward the mainland. Where was the young man who was to bring the desired part of the Gay Girl's engine? He was much in her mind, but he did not appear.

She heard the clock strike ten, and sighed at thought of the night hours yet to come. Looking in at a window she saw Gresham walking the floor, going from side to side of the long, low house, always alert, but calm of expression.

Once more she circled the barn, and so came to where a smaller structure stood half hidden by bushes. It was a shed used for Tilley's cart and other farm articles, and seemed to have no interest for her. She was passing when she noticed that the door was open, though it had been closed a little while before. Recoiling, she was wondering, when the unexpected happened.

From the shed came a man who bore a burden, and this burden he set down on the ground.

"Keep still just a minute, my little man!" he said soothingly. "Just a minute, and then I will take you to a good place."

He turned to close the door.

Amy Thelma had recognized Tresselton's voice, and thoughts swept upon her in a flood, her mind strangely active. She remembered that Gresham had once brought a burden home in his arms, remembered the sob and the cry she had heard, the locked door, and the vaguer incidents, and a belief became all-possessing. Tresselton was stealing a child that had been in Gresham's care.

With a swift rush she covered the few feet between, and seized the small form that had stood wavering on the ground. She pressed it in her arms and fled, her face toward the house.

A fierce exclamation came from Tresselton and he launched himself forward and came between her and the coveted refuge.

"I've got you!" he snarled, and tried to close in upon her.

She screamed loudly, and cut off from the refuge, darted away at full speed, the child struggling in her arms. She screamed again and ran—ran, ran!

Before her were bushes in groups, and it soon became plain that one thing was in her favor. No better place for a game of hide-and-seek could be found. Frightened as she was, her mind remained clear, and she quickly realized that her speed was greater than her pursuer's. She was leaving him behind. Then strategy came to offer its help, and she doubled and turned at full speed, always trying to have a clear way to the house. The plan might have succeeded, but a second man appeared and Tresselton shouted angrily:

"She's somewhere here, Jack! Help me, and we will have her right away!"

Two men to deal with! The house was out of the question. She could do nothing but flee, and it must be done while she was still free from hostile observation. The fringe of bushes stretched in a line, and she ran on, praying that the child would not scream, but the line dwindled, and, as she well knew, would soon end.

Then where was she to go? Where—the answer came to her mind in time.

"The Gay Girl!" she gasped, hope stirring anew.

It was an inspiration. Gresham had always rested satisfied that the secret nook would screen the motor-boat from unfriendly eyes, and it was now a call that gave her new courage. Ah, yes, the motorboat!

She passed the line of bushes, relied briefly upon the darkness, and so came running to the shore. Breaking through the trees and bushes, she saw the shape of the Gay Girl rising somberly, yet like a sure friend.

She ran farther, leaped aboard, and scudded down to the cabin. She knew the place well, and found the support of a locker. Whether the electric lights were in condition to be turned on, she did not know, but she dared not use them. They might betray her.

Panting, frightened, harassed by fears too vague to be met, she crouched and waited. Outside, the water tossed under the wind that drove it and the boat lurched, but it was not for such sounds she listened.

Had she been seen as she came? Was Tresselton at hand? Were footsteps soon to sound on the deck?

For some time she had been crooning to the child, and its sobbing was growing less, but there was no one to cheer her. She held Gresham's fortunes in her arms, and hid in the dark with fast-beating heart. What would happen next?

CHAPTER XV.

THE GAY GIRL GOES.

HALF an hour later the expected happened. There was a bound on the deck of the motor-boat and quick steps sounded directly after. Amy Thelma hugged the child in her arms and waited, pale but firm. With the darkness unbroken, she heard the steps descend the companionway and knew the crisis was at hand.

She shifted the child to her left arm and raised her revolver with the other hand, but did not leave the locker. Somebody entered the cabin, and almost immediately the electric lights flashed up. Amy Thelma gasped in great relief. The newcomer was Gresham!

He stopped short and gazed in amazement—then joy flashed as swiftly as the light had gone up. He saw her, he saw the boy, and it meant much to him.

"Amy!" he cried.

"Uncle John!" cried the child, the words half a shriek of delight.

The Gay Girl's master ran forward and caught Amy's hand, while his free hand fell upon the boy's head.

"This is amazing!" he declared. "Both here, but how I can't see, but I realize that you have again saved my fortunes, Miss Amy. You are my lucky star, my friend in need now as before. You are here! It is something great!"

She rose with an exclamation that was too broken to be clear. The relief, the sudden freedom from nervous tension, was not all calm joy. Nerves would still have their hour of action.

Other words passed quickly, but Gresham remembered something more.

"We must get away from the island," he said incisively. "Dick has come with what I needed for the engine, and repairs can soon be made. The water is so rough he came around to this side to get a lee shore, and I happened to see him as I ran this way. If we can hold my enemies off long enough we will soon be gone from Long John. Stay here! We must take all of our party, you know. I'll get back to Dick and then send him for Betsey, Tilley, and his wife. Tresselton has sent a light afloat as a signal, but it will do him no good, I hope."

Five minutes after Gresham was back and at work on the engine. Half an hour later, with all hands aboard, the Gay Girl was cast loose and allowed to drift out of her hiding place. As soon as she was clear he pulled the throttle open and the old, friendly chugging began. She was beginning her journey when a shout came from the shore.

"Hold on, there! Stop, I say, or we'll fire!"

Gresham measured the intervening distance with his eyes and laughed joyfully.

"Good-by!" he answered tantalizingly. "You lose the game, Tresselton!"

More shouts came, and a single, useless revolver shot, and then the men ashore were ignored. The Gay Girl was going fast, plunging into the tumbling waves, whose power she disdained, chuckling her delight with an endless series of chugs that were more musical than ever before.

"We are off for a safe haven," Gresham pursued. "It's a place where we can stop to take breath and plan for the future, and we'll make it in two hours. This little wind and the frolicsome seas won't harm us a bit, while as for our real troubles—we may safely forget them now."

He touched the buttons and the lights flared out—the searchlight darting ahead like a fiery sword, the red port and the green starboard glows elsewhere coming into life modestly.

"I've got to make brief explanations at once," said Gresham, when a few more fathoms had been run off. "I can't ask you, Miss Amy, to take too much for granted. Particulars you shall have later, but just now a boiled-down account may possibly suffice."

He paused to give the Gay Girl a little more power.

"Tresselton," he then said deliberately, "is my sister's husband. Why she ever believed that knave a decent man, I don't know, but she did and she married him. He neglected her, abused her—but let me say in few words that he is a scoundrel.

"Finally she left him, taking her 2-year-old son with her, and hiding where she mistakenly thought herself safe. Tresselton found her, managed to have the legal custody of the child given to him by a judge who has before been under suspicion, took the boy and fled. My home is in Ohio. Sister telegraphed me and I came to help her.

"I sometimes do things rather warmly, and, having learned that the unworthy father had placed his son in a farmhouse somewhere—somewhere, I say—along this coast, I determined to seize him, in spite of the judge's decree, and take him away by force. I bought back a motor-boat I had formerly owned, and came to these waters. Long John has been owned by my family for 200 years, and the Tilleys are now our tenants and good friends. Coming, I made the island my headquarters and set out to recover my nephew.

"Wishing to avoid publicity and the discovery of my identity I determined to act only at night. From a friend who is a detective I secured a jimmy and other burglar tools for forcing doors and windows, and they are in the cabin this minute. Had I decided to go to work openly, Tresselton would soon have known it was I who had the boy.

"Since coming here I have made night trips to the mainland, breaking into house after house. Such a thing is serious, and would be dangerous to me if known, but—well, call me what you will—I valued my sister and my nephew higher than all other things. She must have her son. Yes, and she is going to have him!

"After several fruitless trials I entered the right house, and finding the child, took him away quietly. Then I hid him in Tilley's house, and we locked certain doors there. Now, there is also a secret, secondary cellar there, a place dug out by my ancestors during the Revolutionary War for their hiding spot in danger times. It is a wholesome excavation, even now, and the boy was there a part of the time. This place was not found by any recent searcher.

"Now, the Gay Girl has been repaired, and I am doing what I could not do before—taking the lad away from his evil father."

The speaker paused and put the helm

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a little farther a-port. Then he laughed lightly.

"That burglar ashore!" he added. "I don't know who he was, but not only have my peaceable breaks been a trifle mixed up with his, but an odd happening came one night. I had skulked up to a house, intending to enter in my way, when I discovered that other men were at the same game—only they were real thieves.

"I was standing quiet, peering into a window, when a man inside came quickly forward and reached a bundle out to me. 'Take this silver,' he said, 'and get back to the road with it.' He had mistaken me for a confederate outside.

"The humor of the situation appealed to me, and as I could not well let the burglars keep it nor wake the family, I did the next best thing, and brought it back to Long John in the Gay Girl. When home I opened the package and found silver knives, forks, bowls, and so on, a rather good-sized haul. For safekeeping I buried the lot on the shore, close by the boat. Two nights later I dug it up, took it back where it belonged, and left it in the right diningroom. That's the kind of a burglar I am!" and Gresham laughed heartily.

"I understand," he resumed, "that its mysterious return has puzzled the officers near there. The place where I was arrested is twenty-five miles distant, and news of the recovery of the silver has not reached them.

"Now, Miss Amy, let me refer to a fiction of mine. At the start I told you I knew nobody here, not even the Tilleys. If that was disingenuous, remember how I was placed. I was not acquainted with you, and I wanted to rescue my nephew secretly, so I did fracture the truth. Later, I realized that I might safely confide in you, but matters took a new turn.

"Briefly, the house in which Tresselton had hidden the boy was that of Moses Lawson, who, I have been told, is your uncle. I did not know your relations with him, nor whether he and you were in sympathy, but it did not seem wise—despite my strong liking for you—for I did like you and respect you greatly—it did not seem wise, I repeat, to tell you anything about my nephew. Naturally, I had a very poor opinion of the man who had taken the child in at Tresselton's request, and—he was your uncle!"

"Not really!" cried Amy Thelma, interrupting. "He is brother to Ezekiel Lawson, but neither is related to me by blood. They were brothers of my father's first wife. Moses is a bad man, worse than Ezekiel. Sir, I don't blame you a bit, for you would have been very foolish to pour out your secrets to one you had known so briefly. For that matter, did I not hide my own secret? We can't blame each other, especially as we were merely using common sense."

"Thank you! I'm glad you look at it that way. Let me see, am I forgetting any minor matter? I think I talked rather foolishly about earning the money to buy the Gay Girl, and about the current expenses of running her now. Really, I wanted a motor-boat early in life, and my father disapproved because I was a minor. An old gentleman, a family friend, loaned me a thousand dollars, and then speculated with it for me until the total was large enough to purchase the Gay Girl. As for current expenses, that was all nonsense. I have—well, enough money to suit me."

"What I don't understand, Mr. Charlton—his real name is Charlton, you see, Miss Amy—is how Tresselton got his hands on your nephew. None of us ever suspected there was a second entrance from the wagonhouse to the secret cellar. Now, how did Tresselton know that?"

The question was not answered until long after, when it was learned that Tresselton, during his life with Gresham's sister, came upon an old map that told the secret in full. In this way he briefly had possession of the child during the last night on Long John. That his son was in the house he did not doubt, after finding Gresham on the island.

Before daylight the runaways were on the mainland, miles distant, and danger was over for them.

Suits at law soon followed. Gresham's sister, bringing action, had the decree set aside that gave the custody of the boy to her unworthy husband, and securing a divorce, forever separated that person from herself and child. Amy Thelma took her case into court, and was triumphantly cleared of blame and placed in possession of her money. Gresham was never called upon to meet trial for theft, for, the real burglars being captured, his innocence was fully established.

He did not return to his Ohio home, but, ostensibly to be able to operate the Gay Girl, remained near the coast. Many times, that year and after, Amy Thelma and Betsey were passengers when the merry boat chugged along in joyous content, and before snows fell it happened that there was a wedding in the cabin of the trim little craft, and Amy Thelma became Mrs. Gresham Charlton.

Then the Gay Girl had a new mystery, a mystery old as the ancient hills and stronger than the power of mountains, the mystery of two lives united in the harmony of one, the blending of sympathy with sympathy, and the smoothing of the pathway through the known world.

The End.

* * *

Very Unpopular.

Mrs. de Style—"The papers say that our minister is to be tried for heresy."

Mrs. Taylor-Made—"He ought to be. Only last Sunday he said that heaven is a place where fashions never change."

Swept It There.

Mrs. Robinson rushed from her bedroom in a state of great indignation, and, leaning over the balustrade at the top of the staircase, shouted angrily:

"Bridget, Bridget, come here this minute!"

Bridget came.

"I thought you said you'd cleaned this room!" continued Mrs. Robinson, still shouting angrily. "But just look under the bed; the floor is simply thick with dust! Haven't I told you that you must always sweep under the beds?"

'Well, mum," replied Bridget, in tearful indignation, "and how, I should like to know, could the dust have got under the bed if I hadn't swept it there?"

* * *

A Necessity.

A letter in the New York Times tells of a stenographer whose eyes gave out and who turned to the farm for a livelihood.

"I had $800," he says, "but was possessed of a good, strong wife, who did all the heavy work, such as plowing, planting, splitting wood, etc. A wife is an absolute necessity—on the farm. I am a Southerner by birth," he adds, "and am, therefore, naturally ambitious."

* * *

He'd Pay for It.

A gang of laborers was employed digging a mysterious ditch across the street. It was a sewer or a place to put a gas pipe or something. One man in particular was working as if he were a chorus man in a play, just going through the motions and pretending to dig a ditch. The foreman came along and spoke to him

"Don't be afraid," he said, with rich sarcasm. "Lean on th' shovel now an' thin. If it breaks, I'll pay for it!"

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The Sportsman's Primer

By Norman H. Crowell

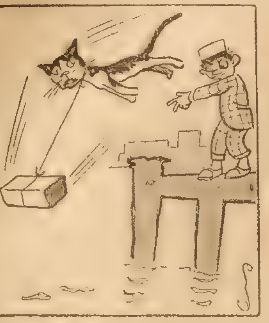
Cat Hunting.

CATS are of two kinds—wild and Tom. Both are legitimate prey at all seasons of the year, the latter being eagerly pursued by a large and rapidly increasing number of our most prominent citizens—citizens to whom all other game is devoid of attraction.

In appearance, habits and visible conduct the two brands of cat differ widely. The wildcat is a stubby, prick-eared arrangement, upholstered in shaggy zibeline the color of the Circassian lady's hair. His ears have eyebrows on them and his tail is short and bushy, like a frazzled pen-wiper. This style of tail is much handier, however, than the cadaverous brand seen on the ordinary quiescent Tom, and is undoubtedly more easily lashed when getting up a fury.

The wildcat's hoofs are festooned with assorted claws in all the latest designs and need but to be felt to be appreciated. A full-grown wildcat, sorrowing over a misspent life often contracts the uncomfortable habit of alighting on a man's spine from the peak of a forty-foot tree. The sensation produced is said to resemble closely being hit by a cotton gin.

Raw spine, by the way, is a wildcat's great hobby. Any person possessing a spine which they desire preserved intact should pad same systematically before venturing into dangerous proximity to a wildcat having family troubles on his mind. A large, rude wildcat once yanked three links out of a Swede corn husker's backbone, greatly to that gentleman's discomfort and chagrin


"Approved by the Supreme Court."

As to the other brand—the tomcat—he arrives in a variety of shades and colors, like flowers. Like flowers, too, he is abroad in the spring. White ears and tail, attached to a groundwork of black and salmon, with a lavender chin, make a striking cat on a moonlit evening. But on a real dark night the cat having the foregoing specifications cannot be told, by the ear, from one colored like an old pair of jeans breeches.

The tomcat's habits are nocturnal and infernal. When Morpheus has the world choked down to a gasp the festive Tom slides from behind the barn and bursts into full chorus. The symptoms of his presence are so well known that more than casual mention would be superfluous. The mournful wail—the moans that break your heart—the calliope cadenzas that tear your gizzard into shreds—these are all instantly recognized by the reader.

If you are in bare feet on a hard pine floor with the mercury shrivelled up like a dividend on oil well stock, it may require some time before you perceive the cat. But he is there and presently you clamp eye on him looming up bigger than an embossed gas bill.

Procedure varies according to the individual. Some otherwise sane men have been known to throw the contents of the bedroom out into the back yard without disturbing the cat in the slightest. Others jab a pillow into each ear softly remark a stanza or so and drop into troubled slumber dreaming of twenty-seven luxurious ways of killing tomcats

Recognized authorities are agreed that capital punishment is the only remedy for the troubadour Tom. It is useless to shoot the cat—never attempt it. A thoroughly-shot cat will be around on duty the following night as fresh as if just in from a vacation at the seashore.

Having passed the sentence of death on the cat, the essential thing is to secure the corpus delicti—that is, the cat. After locating the animal's favorite roost, the spot, usually the hitching post, is heavily coated with tar. This done, retire, not forgetting to stifle one or two manly chuckles as you slip on your lovely pink and white nighti

Night draws on (not necessary to specify what she draws on) and the scene of the tragedy becomes calm. On the post the freshly laid tar yearns for its victim. In the far distance a sound is heard—an infant in distress perhaps—or is it a swain stabbed by a faithful hat pin? Nearer and still nearer it comes until the palpitating silence recognizes its direst enemy—the tomcat.

With a bound the cat vaults upon the hitching post and settles himself cosily for the evening rehearsal. In the course of half an hour the cat has formed an acquaintance with the post that cannot be severed except by a spade and a pickax.

Here the citizen comes on the scene. He dissects the cat from the post and lugs him to the brickyard. He selects a nice, large sun-tanned brick. He next extracts from a pocket a stout cord having two ends. One end is connected with the brick—the other with the cat. The brick is then heaved into the river This is perfectly justifiable and approved by the Supreme Court of most of the States and Territories

* * *

Whaling.

WHALING is one of the most exciting sports known, and its followers find it far more insidious than the drink habit. Those who have had the pleasure of hooking a young and passionate whale in its native element (where, by the way, it generally stays) pronounce the sport thrilling to the highest degree. Besides furnishing sport to the angler the whale is a highly prized article of commerce for the reason that he is composed principally of whale bone and whale meat.

The man who would land a whale arises at an exceedingly remote period of the morning. Having selected a light, trim thirty-two-foot pole, a three-foot lawn hose reel, six hundred feet of tarred manila rope and a dory anchor, he rigs up his tackle.

If the morning is cloudy the proper caper in the bait line is the last half of a dark bay cabhorse. If clear weather, use a brindle steer with the tassel still on the tail. Cast from the stern of the boat, using a delicate wrist movement that brings the bait skimming lightly over the water.

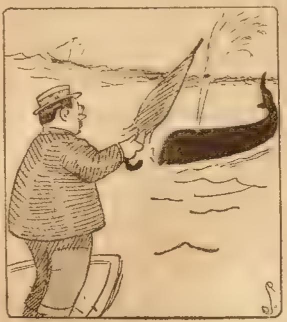
The favorite haunts of whales are the deep pools in the ocean beneath overhanging wreckage. Carefully fish all such spots, taking care to keep the bait as fresh and natural as possible.

If you have followed instructions closely it will not be long before you detect a nibble. This feels something like being pulled through a picket fence by a pet bull. Do not act too hastily give him time—give him time! A whale is a most fastidious creature, but by slowly drawing the bait through the water in imitation of a drowning section hand, you will dispel his fears.

When he finally opens up and shuts down on your hook you will notice a feeling of weight and dull sinking sensation. Strike immediately, throwing your right leg across the reel to control his first rush. By bearing down till your pants catch fire you may stop him and you may not.

This is the most critical moment in whaling. Finding himself checked, the infuriated animal dashes back intent on vengeance. Unless thwarted he is liable to create a disturbance among your heirs, and you must therefore act promptly. When the whale is within fifteen feet of you, coming head-on, suddenly unfurl a bright red umbrella and jab it at him. At the same time yell "Scat!" as loudly as possible. No whale yet observed can stand this treatment and inside of ten minutes he will expire of a broken heart. You can then reel him in like a pail of mud from a well.

Occasionally a whale will be found whose tactics are of the waiting kind. In this case you should have several days' food supply on hand, as it will take time. A nice plump whale makes a fine mess for a family of about two hundred and fifty.


"Unfurl a bright red umbrella and jab it at him."

* * *

Struck for Home.

"Yes, sir, I've been a soldier, and once came mighty near being mixed up in a battle, and if it hadn't been for obeying the orders of our old colonel, who was a regular brick, I might be sleeping with my martial cloak around me now."

"Why, how was that?" asked a listener.

"Well, the enemy were in sight, and we were getting ready to go for 'em. I wasn't feeling the least bit comfortable, when all of a sudden up jumps the old colonel on a stump and shouts

"'Now then, boys, up and at 'em! Strike for home and country!'

"Some of them—a good many, in fact—struck for their country, but I struck for home, and precious glad I am I did it!"

* * *

Wonderful Touch.

The principal grocer of a small country town was chatting with several customers when a discussion arose as to the wonderful sense of touch that the blind have.

"Here comes old blind Henry Perkins now," said the grocer. "We'll test him."

He took a scoopful of sugar and extended it to the old man.

"Feel this, Henry," he said, "and tell us what it is."

The blind man put his hand in the scoop, passed its contents through his fingers and said in a firm, confident tone, "Sand!"

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Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

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GENTLE JABS

Large scandals from small talks grow.

Luckily a man is never too old to forget.

Prosperity helps some men to forget their friends.

And lovers rush in where husbands fear to tread.

As a matter of fact a necessary evil is unnecessary.

Perhaps poets may be born, but liars are self-made.

To live long and prosper let the other fellow worry.

There is usually a way to get around any kind of rule.

If things fail to come your way, why not go after them?

A word to the wife is sufficient—to start a rough house.

Pay as you go—but save enough to pay for a return ticket.

A man's good opinion of himself isn't going to fool St. Peter.

In this land of plenty there are plenty of people who haven't.

Grafters get into office when honest men fail to do their duty.

If you want anything advertised without cost tell it to a gossip.

Feminine curiosity makes liars of many an otherwise truthful man.

Many a dollar goes into the jackpot that ought to go into the soup pot.

The girl who can't sing and won't sing is entitled to her choice of husbands.

But it is impossible to patch up a reputation so that the patches won't show.

If a woman marries the wrong man it is because the right one failed to ask her.

Any man can score a big hit with a woman: all he has to do is sit still and listen.

In union there may be strength, but without unions there would be no divorces

Adam's downfall was due to an apple; but many another downfall can be traced to a peach.

We feel sorry for the rich woman who has poor taste. Everybody sits up and takes notice.

But the average man would have no use for mirrors if he could see himself in them as others see him.

Poets are born—at least they used to say they were, but the printed verse suggests that race suicide has hit the poet crop.

PEPPERS

Oh, but It Was Cruel!

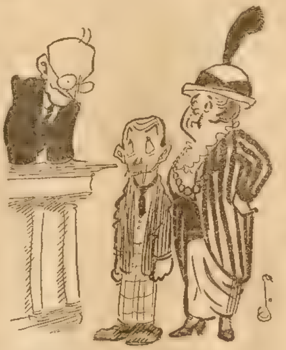
A woman entered a railway train crowded with winter tourists and happened to take a seat in front of a newly married couple. She was hardly seated before the couple began making remarks about her which some of the passengers must have heard.

Her last year's bonnet and cloak were freely criticised, with more or less giggling on the bride's part; and there is no telling what might have come next if the woman had not put a sudden stop to the conversation by a bit of clever feminine strategy.

She turned her head, noticed that the bride was considerably older than the bridegroom, and in the smoothest of tones said:

"Madam, will you please have your son remove his feet from the back of my chair?"

■



Judge—"I sentence you to kiss your wife twice a day for a month."

Prisoner—"And how much time do I get off for good behavior?"

■

An Adaptable Prodigal.

A man who lived in Raleigh, N. C., fell heir to about fifteen thousand dollars and immediately spent it in high living. A second and a third good-sized sum of money came to him; and each time he played prodigal son until he was without funds.

One day Josephus Daniels, now Secretary of the Navy, met this man on the street in Raleigh. The prodigal was in rags, looked hungry and was evidently in very hard luck.

"It seems to me that you must have a tough time," said Daniels. "How do you stand it after the good living, luxuries, and fine clothes you have been accustomed to?"

"Mr. Daniels," the man replied, "I'll tell you how I do it: I have made arrangements to get along without what I can't get."

■

No Sportsman.

A certain Irishman living in New York owns a number of tenement houses on the East Side in the Jewish district. One day one of his tenants, a little, wizened-up Jew, called at his office to make a complaint.

"I tell you, Mister Murphy, I am goin' to leave your flat."

"Sure, now," answered Murphy, "and what is the trouble?"

"Vell, I tell you dere's too many rats in dot flat. Vy, only yesterday I kills eight!"

Murphy jumped to his feet in anger, and bellowed forth: "An' 'tis rats, is it, that is bothering ye? You lave thim rats alone! What do you want for eight dollars a month? Hunting privileges?"

❧

Winners in Their Class.

There are some good stories in Mr. Reginald Lucas' biography of Lord North. One tells of an amusing blunder. Lady North was no beauty. It is said that one night at the opera somebody asked:

"Who is that plain-looking lady in the box opposite?"

"That," said North, "is my wife."

"I did not mean her," came the obvious rejoinder; "I meant the lady next to her."

"That, sir, is my daughter; and I may tell you that we are considered to be three of the ugliest people in London."

❧

Music as Medicine.

A reporter asked Oscar Hammerstein one day if he believed in the new therapeutic idea that music was a medicine.

"Believe in it? Of course I do," the impresario replied. "I know at least three operas that are a drug on the market, while as for popular songs, there isn't one of them that doesn't make me ill."

Vaccination at the Hub.

It was at a dinner party. The bright young man found himself privileged to sit next to the young woman with beautiful arms and neck. He thought himself the most favored personage in the room. Suddenly his fair companion exhibited signs of nervousness. Two of his very best jokes, saved for a special occasion, passed by unnoticed. Her face wore a look of alarm. Apprehensively the young man gazed at her and, meeting the look, she said:

"I am in misery."

"In misery?" echoed the man.

"Yes," she replied. "I was vaccinated the other day and it has taken beautifully. I could almost scream, it hurts so."

The young man looked at the beautiful arms and, seeing no mark there, said:

"Why, where were you vaccinated?"

"In Boston," she replied, the smile chasing away the look of pain.

■

Didn't Want to Spoil the Fun.

Four old Scotchmen, the remnant of a club formed some fifty years ago, were seated around the table in the clubroom It was 5 a. m. and Dougal looked across to Donald and said in a thick, sleepy voice:

"Donald, d'ye notice what an awful peculiar expression there is on Jack's face?"

"Aye," says Donald, "I noticed that; he's dead! He's been dead these four hours."

"What! Dead! Why did ye no tell me?"

"Ah, no—no," said Donald. "A'm no that kind o' man to disturb a convivial evening."

❧

Not That Kind of Touch.

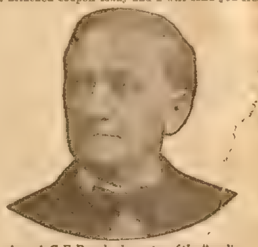
Cardinal Gibbons made the opening prayer at the last Democratic National Convention in Baltimore

There were two doorkeepers on the main door. One was a very devout Catholic and the other was not.

As the Cardinal came down the aisle to go to his home the Catholic doorkeeper leaned across to the other and said:

"Hey, Jim, be sure to touch the Cardinal when he goes out!"

"What pocket has he got it in?" asked Jim hoarsely.



Don't Wear A Truss!

After Thirty Years' Experience I Have Produced An Appliance for Men, Women or Children That Cures Rupture.

I Send It On Trial.

If you have tried most everything else, come to me. Where others fail is where I have my greatest success. Send attached coupon today and I will send you free my illustrated book on Rupture and its cure, showing my Appliance and giving you prices and names of many people who have tried it and were cured. It gives instant relief when all others fail. Remember, I use no salves, no harness, no lies.

I send on trial to prove what I say is true. You are the judge and once having seen my illustrated book and read it you will be as enthusiastic as my hundreds of patients whose letters you can also read. Fill out the coupon below and mail today. It's well worth your time whether you try my Appliance or not

The above is C. E. Brooks, inventor of the Appliance, who cured himself and who is now giving others the benefit of his experience. If ruptured, write him today, at Marshall, Mich.

FREE INFORMATION COUPON

Mr. C. E. Brooks,
1843 A, State St., Marshall, Mich.

Please send me by mail, in plain wrapper, your illustrated book and full information about your Appliance for the cure of rupture

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Address ....

City .... State ....

TAPE-WORM Expelled alive in [illegible] minutes with head, or no fee. No fasting. 68 page Book for 2c stamp. DR M. NEY SMITH, Specialist, 304 N. 12th St., St. Louis, Mo.

A 1914 Twin-Cylinder Motorcycle FREE

M	O	R	T	O
C	L	Y	C	E

We will give absolutely free a 1914 Model, 8 h. p., Twin Cylinder, $250 Harley-Davidson Motorcycle to the person holding the most points in our contest ending July 31st. If a tie, price of motorcycle will be divided.

Unlimited cash rewards to everyone who takes part in the contest. In addition you will have an opportunity to get many other valuable prizes. The letters in the squares when properly placed spell one word mentioned in this advertisement. 2,000 POINTS FREE FOR SOLVING THE PUZZLE. Your name and address will bring full details of the contest, together with a complete description of the motorcycle.

C. A. TAYLOR, B W, Epitomist Building, SPENCER, IND.

Mellow Springs Whiskey Private Stock
St. Louis, Mo.

FREE
DECANTERS
With Delicious Wines And Cordials

TRY THIS WHISKEY AT OUR RISK FREE

We want you to try our famous old *Mellow Springs Whiskey* wholly at our risk. Use a full quart bottle to test it out if you like—and if not *more* than satisfied return unused portion and we will refund your money immediately.

4 Full Quart Bottles MELLOW SPRINGS WHISKEY $2.25
8 Full Quart Bottles MELLOW SPRINGS WHISKEY $4.25
12 Full Quart Bottles MELLOW SPRINGS WHISKEY $6.25

With each 4 quarts of *Mellow Springs* we send *free*, a handsome scroll glass decanter, filled with delicious Sherry, Port or Angelica Wine or Manhattan Cocktail. Decanter is full size—handsome and useful. *Also FREE* gold-tipped Whiskey Glass and Patent cork screw.

MAYCLIFFE DIST. CO., 204 Maycliffe Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

Smokeless Lantern Burner Free

WILL LIGHT UP YOUR BARN AND HELP MAKE THE CHORES EASY

One Lantern equipped with a Steel Mantle Burner
Gives as much light as three Ordinary Lanterns

The Steel Mantle Burner is a smoke consumer, burning all the carbon in the oil and allowing no smoke to escape. As the Steel Mantle Burner consumes the smoke, it prevents the accumulation of soot on the chimney and allows the light to pass through the chimney and saves frequent cleaning of chimneys and globes. The Steel Mantle Burner is therefore a Gas Producer and Burner There is nothing to adjust. There are no loose parts. Does not have to be taken off to trim the wick and does not have to be readjusted after trimming the wick. It is always in place. It is not a fly trap and will not catch flies, moth millers and insects. Steel Mantle Lamp or Lantern burners will not smoke when turned low.

They Give More Light per Gallon of Oil Than Any Other Lantern Burner.

No. 1 Steel Mantle Lamp Burners fit No. 1 Lamps which use a wick ⅝ of an inch wide.
No. 2 Steel Mantle Lamp Burners fit No. 2 Lamps which use a wick 1 inch wide.
No. 2 Steel Mantle Lantern Burners fit No. 2 Cold Blast Tubular Burners which use a wick 1 inch wide. We send a wick with each Burner.

The lamp burners are just the thing for the long evenings, and the lantern burners can't be beat for chores. You can get through quicker if you can see what you are doing. Fits any good number two cold blast tubular lantern.

Don't forget to say what size you want. You can get a burner FREE by sending $1.00 for a year's subscription (new or renewal) to the Blade or Ledger. Canada subscription $1.50. We do not pay customs duties. Don't put up with smoky lights. Send at once.

W. D. BOYCE COMPANY,
500 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

Warship Adventures

Or, FRANK ALLEN AT SEA

By Julian Fabre

[Copyright 1914 by W. D. Boyce Co.]

Begun in No. 25, June 20. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER IV.

THE men took their places with the swiftness born of practice for such an emergency. Some had been assigned to place some article of food or water in a particular boat, others stood by the boats, prepared to lower them, while still others got out the collision mat, with the purpose of securing it over the leak on the outside of the ship by chains. The damage had been done by a submerged berg, which had penetrated the vessel's side and caused an inflow of water into the engineroom, putting out of commission the dynamo which furnished the power by which the watertight doors were closed from the bridge. These had to be closed by hand.

"There's a fifteen-inch hole twenty-five feet under water," reported the chief engineer.

Captain Ellsworth rushed from the bridge, accompanied by the first luff. As they passed Frank's station the Captain called for a dozen men to follow him. They rushed into the starboard engineroom, which was already waist-deep with water, and, assisted by coal passers, oilers, and water tenders, fought desperately in the cataract of water, which bowled them about like tenpins.

Presently the inflow began to diminish as all hands worked furiously to stop the flow of water rushing in through the hole in the side of the Houston. The collision mat had been secured in place, the pumps were got working, and soon the engineroom was dry.

It was found that the injury could be sufficiently repaired at sea, and the Houston continued on her course, Captain Ellsworth determining to have the ship overhauled at Southampton, where the warship presently arrived.

"The starboard watch goes on liberty!"

The liberty men swarmed into cutters and launches, and these were soon racing one another toward the dock. The Houston had arrived off Southampton on the preceding day. Leave extended until eleven o'clock that evening, and Walt and Frank were anxious to see all of Southampton that was possible during the afternoon, reserving London for another occasion.

The two young fellows, who were of a more serious bent of mind than most of the others, occupied themselves with tracing the outlines of the old Norman fortifications. They inspected the Norman arch that spans the High street, looked over the shipping in the harbor, and at about eight o'clock in the evening found themselves at the foot of the High street, wondering how they were to spend the remainder of the evening. Just then a party of British bluejackets bumped into them.

"Hello, Jacky!" shouted one of them, hitting Frank on the back, "why ain't you going to the fight? Scared before it begins, are you?"

"What fight?" demanded Frank and Walt together.

"Don't you know that Gunner Spofforth's going to knock the insides out of Quartermaster Trench?" demanded the other.

Both Walt and Frank laughed uproariously. Quartermaster Trench, of the Houston, was an ex-middleweight champion of the Atlantic fleet. The idea of anybody doing anything to him was an amusing one.

"It's a fact, mate," whispered another of the men huskily. "We come over from Portsmouth especially to see fair play. It wouldn't be allowed by the old man, because he thinks it would make bad blood to whip a Yankee when he's our guest, but we've arranged to have it pulled off on the quiet."

"We're with you," shouted Frank, and the party hurried out of the High street, turned down an unsavory-looking lane, and entered a sort of barn at the back of a saloon. The place was crammed with men from the Houston and the British vessel, and the air thick with smoke, through which, to his astonishment, Frank saw Quartermaster Trench, stripped to the waist, sitting upon his second's knee at the side of a ring which had been staked off upon a sanded floor. And, in fact, a round had just been fought, but without much result.

The fight was the result of a challenge made on the occasion of a British warvessel's recent visit to New York, where Quartermaster Trench was then posted at the navy yard. Its imminence had been known to a number of the old hands on the Houston, but none of the recruits had been taken into their confidence.

Gunner Spofforth was a beefy-looking man with enormous muscles, but his footwork was slow, and Frank could see that he was muscle-bound through over-development, for his blows, though a single one, landing fairly, would have put Trench out of business, lacked quickness. Trench, who was in the pink of condition, seemed destined to be the winner.

"Time, gentlemen," shouted the referee. The sailors advanced and shook hands, and instantly Trench landed a blow which sent the Gunner staggering against the ropes. Spofforth was upon his feet in a surprisingly quick space of time, however, and, after several indecise blows, landed one upon Trench's nose which sent him spinning and started the blood. This ended the second round.

The third was a furious one. Spofforth, realizing that the fight must be a short one if he was to retain his advantage, sprang at his antagonist and drove him all round the ring, but only a few of his blows landed, and toward the end Trench evened things up with a body blow that made the Gunner cough and gasp for breath.

In the fourth round Trench changed his tactics. He stood up to Spofforth and exchanged blow for blow. Both combatants were soon covered with blood. Each had a cut lip, and Trench's eye was closing. The audience went wild.

"Do him up, Spof!" yelled the Britishers. "Finish him! Finish him!"

The Americans cheered their own man wildly in answer, and Trench rushed the Gunner against the ropes and delivered a swinging blow with his right upon the jaw. The Gunner dropped like a stone, and, the ropes giving way under the impact of his body, rolled outside upon the floor.

"Foul blow!" yelled a British bluejacket, darting into the ring.

The American's second caught the interloper by the waist and pitched him to the ground, where, having struck upon his head with some force, he lay stunned. At once a free fight broke out. The men, overcome by partisan feeling, jumped into the ring, snatched up chairs, and belabored each other savagely. Frank felt his rage mount to his head; he had no doubt that the Britishers had interfered to save their champion from being counted out. He was using his fists effectively when the leg of a chair, from which a long nail projected, struck him a glancing blow across the forehead, inflicting a long, superficial wound, which bled freely, nearly blinding him.

He forced his way to the door and into the road, where he wiped the blood from his eyes. He was about to return, when whistles sounded, and a line of police came down the street at the double. They pounced upon him first of all, and, while he was being made a prisoner, the saloon was cleared, and half a dozen of the American sailors were arrested. They were all marched to the lockup and placed in cells.

In the morning they were taken to court and each enriched the city's treasury by five dollars. They had hardly emerged before they were taken in charge by a couple of masters-at-arms from the Houston, one of whom was the petty officer, Thompson, and marched back to the cutter, which speedily conveyed them to the vessel.

They were at once haled before Lieutenant-Commander Merritt, who had assumed charge of the ship, Captain Ellsworth having gone ashore upon some official ceremony. The executive officer was in a towering rage.

"You have disgraced your ship and your country!" he roared at them. "The first liberty party that goes ashore in a foreign port make beasts of themselves by drinking and getting into a fight."

Each of the prisoners was fined five days' pay, and his liberty was stopped for the remainder of the time the Houston lay off Southampton.

Frank's first thought was one of elation that Walt had not been captured. Then came a sense of keen regret at his behavior. He realized that he had disgraced himself and his uniform, and resolved to steer clear of all but legitimate fights in future. He was destined to have plenty of those.

CHAPTER V.

THE Houston had returned from her voyage and put in at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where the recruits were transferred to the U. S. battleship Albany, then lying up for overhauling and cleaning. As the captain of the Albany had been placed on the retiring list, another was appointed, and the selection fell upon Lieutenant-Commander Merritt, who at the same time received promotion to the rank of Commander. Among those transferred was Petty Officer Thompson, who was now rated as Master-at-Arms, Second Class.

Thompson had had a quiet talk with Frank and given his some wholesome advice as to his conduct. Frank had thought that Thompson seemed desirous of confiding something more than advice to him, but whatever it was, Thompson evidently thought better of it.

Frank found himself a member of a floating town, with almost as many inhabitants as his own village; yet there was this difference, that there were no loafers here, and nobody was dissatisfied with his job. There were grumblers, of course, but it was realized that nothing but efficiency could win a man promotion. Grumblers were not favored in the navy, and were apt to find that alacrity paid.

Everything went by clockwork. The battleship was like the city of the future that some have dreamed of. There were enough provisions and stores to supply a city for many weeks, and men whose sole task it was to take care of them.

Gives Quick Home Cure For Corns, Callouses And All Sore Feet

This information will be welcomed by the thousands of victims of daily foot torture. Don't waste time. Get it at once. No matter how many patent medicines you have tried in vain this treatment, which was formerly known only to doctors, will do the work. "Dissolve two tablespoonfuls of Calocide compound in a basin of warm water. Soak the feet in this for full fifteen minutes, gently rubbing the sore parts." The effects are marvelous. All pain goes instantly and the feet feel simply delightful. Corns and callouses can be peeled right off; bunions, aching feet, sweaty smelling feet, get immediate relief. Use this treatment a week and your foot troubles will be a thing of the past. Calocide works through the pores and removes the cause. Get a twenty-five cent box from any druggist. Calocide compound prepared only by Medical Formula Co., of Chicago, Ill., and Dayton, Ohio.

Sister: Read My Free Offer!

I am a woman.
I know a woman's trials.
I know her need of sympathy and help.

If you, my sister, are unhappy because of ill-health, if you feel unfit for household duties, social pleasures, or daily employment, write and tell me just how you suffer, and ask for my **free ten days' trial** of a **home treatment** suited to your needs. **Men cannot understand** women's sufferings. What we women know from experience, we know better than any man. I want to tell you how to cure yourself at home at a cost of about 12 cents a week.

If you suffer from women's peculiar ailments causing **pain in the head, back, or bowels, feeling of weight and dragging down sensation, falling or displacement of pelvic organs, causing kidney and bladder weakness or constipation and piles, painful or irregular periods, catarrhal conditions and discharges, extreme nervousness, depressed spirits, melancholy, desire to cry, fear of something evil about to happen, creeping feeling along the spine, palpitation, hot flashes, weariness, sallow complexion with dark circles under the eyes, pain in the left breast or a general feeling that life is not worth living,**

I INVITE YOU TO SEND TODAY FOR MY FREE TEN DAYS' TREATMENT

and learn how these ailments can be easily and surely conquered at home without the dangers and expense of an operation. **When you are cured,** and able to enjoy life again, you can pass the good word along to some other sufferer. My home treatment is for **young or old.** To **Mothers of Daughters,** I will explain how to overcome green sickness (chlorosis), irregularities, headaches, and lassitude in young women and restore them to plumpness and health. Tell me if you are worried about your daughter. **Remember it costs you nothing** to give my home treatment a ten days' trial, and does not interfere with daily work. **If health is worth asking for,** then accept my generous offer and **write for the free treatment,** including my illustrated booklet, **"Women's Own Medical Adviser."** I will send all in plain wrappers postpaid. To save time, you can cut out this offer, mark your feelings, and return to me. **Send today,** as you may not see this offer again. Address,

MRS. M. SUMMERS, 457 E. WASHINGTON AVE., SOUTH BEND, IND.

Marvelous Baseball Curver

BECOME A CRACK PITCHER AND FAN OUT THE BATTERS

Worn on the hand it aids in giving the ball a rapid whirling motion, thus causing a wide curve. So small it is not noticed, and they all wonder where those *AWFUL curves come from.* Send for a curver today if you want to be a crack pitcher and fan out the batters. Thousands of boys all over the country enthusiastic over this wonderful device. We also send instructions on how to throw all curves—very valuable. Any boy who wants to become a good pitcher can do so with our instructions and the aid of the wonderful little curver. *Nothing else like it* ever invented. We will also send our complete course of 6 lessons in pitching by the greatest masters of the age, such as Brown, White, Mathewson, Johnson, Rucker and Wood, also our great list of Minor league managers who want players and salaries they pay to players. Also our great offers on suits, masks, gloves, etc., all for 35c. Send today. 3 Curves and above 60c. W. M. Co., 337 W. Madison St., 7 E 51, Chicago.

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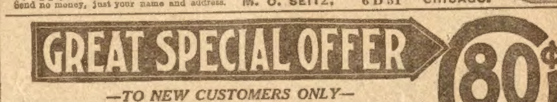
POWERFUL AIR RIFLE Length 32 inches. Working parts of the best grades of steel. The stock is finely polished walnut. Shoots small game. Powerful, accurate, durable. You can have this air rifle for distributing only 8 of our fast selling art pictures at 25 cents on our special offer. Everybody will take one. **IT COSTS YOU NOTHING** to try, as we take back those you can't dispose of. Send no money, just your name and address. M. O. SEITZ, 6 D 51 CHICAGO.



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THIS is a special introductory offer we are making to NEW customers only — and if YOU have never tried Hayner Whiskey, we want you to try it NOW. Cut out this ad—mail it with your order and 80 cents in stamps or coin — and the full quart bottle of *Hayner Private Stock Bottled-in-Bond Whiskey* will be sent in sealed case—express charges paid. It's great—a *Bottled-in-Bond* whiskey of the finest kind—sealed with the U. S. Government's Green Stamp over the cork—your assurance it is fully aged, full 100% proof, full measure—as good and pure as can be produced. It's *sure* to please you—*sure* to win your future trade. You take no chances—you know we are responsible—been in business 47 years—capital $500,000.00 fully paid. Don't put this off — *order right now* — and goods will go forward by first express.

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WHISKEY
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THE HAYNER DISTILLING COMPANY

There were medical stores enough to fit out a hospital, with an efficient corps of hospital apprentices to handle the duties of the surgeon's department. Deep down beneath the water-line the dynamos whirred and the turbines revolved, and coal-passers, oilers, and water-tenders went about their duties, each knowing exactly what was required of him. The yeomen managed the clerical and accounting departments; the various artificers cared for the ship's material needs—plumbers, painters, electricians, fitters and coppersmiths.

Every man knew exactly what he was to do in every emergency, whether to close water-tight doors at collision drill, hold a hose at fire-quarters, pull an oar should the ship have to be abandoned, hoist ammunition at general quarters, or fling a buoy to a drowning man.

Frank and Walt made frequent excursions about New York while the Albany lay in the navy yard. Before she sailed, an incident occurred which nearly had disastrous results upon Frank's career, and was destined, in another way, to have an important bearing upon his future.

Frank had gone off alone, declining his friend's offer of his company, to see the exhibition of machinery in Madison Square Garden. He had liberty till eight o'clock, and so absorbed was he in what he saw that he suddenly realized he had only just time to get back before his leave expired. With ten minutes to spare, he had crossed the Brooklyn bridge and was passing along Navy street, almost within sight of the yard gates, when he saw a pretty, dark-haired girl and an older woman walking with hurried footsteps in his direction.

It was a Saturday, and every corner groggery in that rather disreputable district was filled with men, some of whom leaned at the swing doors and shouted insults to passers-by, particularly if they were women. As the two ladies neared Frank, but on the opposite side of the street, two drunken men ran out of a saloon and accosted them rudely.

The dark-haired girl shrank back, the elder woman screamed, and just as one of the men had laid his hand upon the younger, Frank sprang at him and struck him a blow which sent him sprawling into the gutter. But as he turned upon the other fellow he found himself beset by some half-dozen more, who came pouring out of the saloon and from an alley. Frank staggered under a shower of blows. He contrived, however, to place himself between his antagonists and the women, and was giving a good account of himself in spite of the odds against him, when something seemed to close over his head, shutting out light and sound. He felt himself reeling, flung out his arms, and pitched forward into the street.

"Can I see him now, sir?"

Frank heard the words, but did not know where he was. It seemed as though an eternity had passed. His head ached intolerably, and an involuntary groan escaped his lips as he opened his eyes and looked about him. He saw Thompson at his bedside.

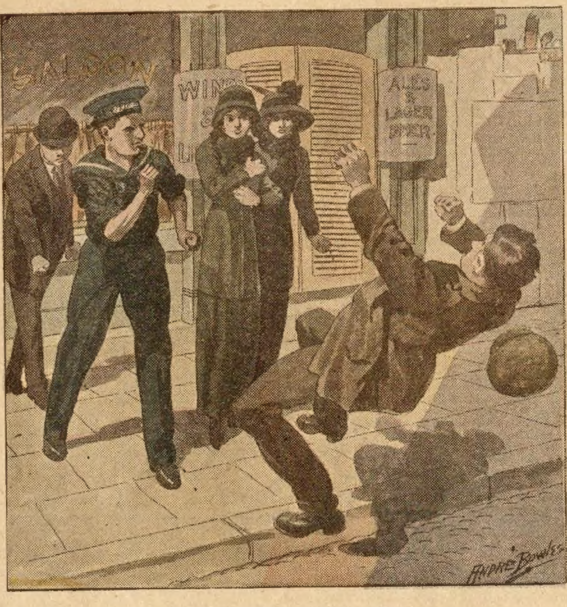
"Where am I?" he asked faintly.

"You're in the ship's hospital, my lad," answered the petty officer, gruffly.

"Aboard tne Albany?"

"That's the size of it, my lad, and a prisoner."

"But I can't have overstayed my leave," Frank exclaimed in dismay. "I had ten minutes to spare, and——" He was trying hard to remember what had happened to him. "What is the charge against me?" he demanded, abandoning his effort.



Frank sent him to the gutter.

"There's a good many," answered Thompson. "Drunkenness, disorderly conduct, absence over leave, and returning unfit for duty. And since you got into trouble in Southampton it looks like a summary court-martial for you, and unless you mend your ways you'll wind up in the barracks at Port Royal. Uncle Sam doesn't want any toughs in his navy."

Thompson shook his head meditatively and continued:

"Take a leaf out of my book, my lad. I've been minded often to tell you a bit of my own history, although the memory isn't a pleasant one, and now I'll do it to save you if I can. I was just the sort of young fellow you are when I joined the service—a regular tough case, and I thought the navy was a sort of joint where I'd run things my own way. After I'd been in trouble for pretty nigh on a year, I struck a warrant officer. They gave me a court-martial, and I was sentenced to a year's imprisonment, to be followed by a dishonorable discharge. Just about that time Congress established the Port Royal Disciplinary Barracks, where they take men like I was and you are and make them over. I saw where I was drifting, and I hauled down the devil's flag and shortened sail, with the result that, after I'd done eight months, I was restored to duty and the discharge canceled. And here I am a second-class master-at-arms, by God's grace and the good will of my superiors. And I guess you'd better think mighty seriously where you are bound for."

Thompson evidently considered Frank to be a hardened offender, and continued in the same strain till Frank interrupted to inquire the circumstances that had led up to his arrest.

"I'll remind you, lad," answered Thompson, "for I know well how liquor takes the memory clean out of a man. Well, at half-past eight on Saturday night the Captain sent me ashore to round up those who had overstayed their leave—meaning you. I was a bit puzzled, I confess. If I'd thought you was one of the kind we used to have in the navy I wouldn't have had to go far to find you in some low groggery or other. But I thought you was different to that. So round I went to the police station, and the first thing the sergeant showed me was you, lying drunk in a cell. Well, seeing it was Saturday night, and the bums coming in thicker than the cells would hold 'em, the police didn't want to make a charge, so the end of it was I shook you into some sort of soberness and got you back here. No sooner were you aboard ship than you went down again like a dead one. It was to have been the brig for you, but the surgeon thought you might have been doped as well as drunk, and that you'd best be under observation in the hospital. So that's how you came here. And now you'd best get your defense ready in your mind, because Merritt's hopping mad, seeing that some toughs insulted his sister and another lady on Saturday night almost outside the navy yard, and he's likely to make an example of you."

Frank now understood everything. He had evidently been sandbagged, arrested, and taken to a cell as a drunken sailor who had been knocked down in a brawl, while the two ladies had escaped without troubling themselves about him. He resolved to say nothing of the episode, however, except to deny the charges. He was too proud to explain, no matter what might happen. He ascertained from Thompson that this was Monday morning; he had lain unconscious thirty-six hours.

"You mend your ways, my lad," concluded Thompson as he rose to leave, "and you can retrieve yourself yet."

He had just got to the door when it was opened and Commander Merritt entered, together with the two ladies. Frank's heart leaped in his breast. The Commander advanced to his bedside.

"Is this the man you spoke about, Mary?" he asked the elder woman.

Commander Merritt's sister cast a quick glance at Frank.

"That is he, Robert," she exclaimed. "I am positive of it."

"It is!" exclaimed the younger. "And if it hadn't been for his aid, I don't know what would have become of us. He kept a whole mob of ruffians at bay until the police came. We wanted to stop and thank him, but they hurried us away."

Commander Merritt came a step nearer.

"Allen," he said, with some emotion, "I thank you in my sister's name and that of her companion, Miss Raymond, for your courageous act, and let me add, in my own also. It will not be forgotten."

"And we thank him in person!" excleimed Miss Merritt, as the Commander gave her his arm to lead her from the room.

Thompson's face was a study when they were together again.

"My lad, I judged you wrong, and I'm mighty sorry," he said.

Frank's headache disappeared as if magically, and on the next morning he was able to return to duty.

CHAPTER VI.

TROUBLE had arisen between the United States Government and a small, chronically disturbed Central American State, which, during the course of the latest revolution, had arbitrarily imprisoned American citizens and confiscated their property. It became rumored that the Albany was to be sent to Asuncion, the principal port, to exact reparation. Excitement ran high, and when, a few days after Frank's adventure, the warship was suddenly ordered to make ready to sail at immediate notice, enthusiasm reigned aboard. The prospect of possible active service enlivened every one, both officers and enlisted men, bluejackets and marines, and even the yeomen plied their typewriters with martial air.

The order was given to depart, anchors were weighed, and the ship headed down the Narrows toward the open sea.

Before Frank had been at sea twenty-four hours his martial ardor was entirely subdued by an attack of seasickness, from which he had been immune during the voyage to England. He had

Grandmother
Didn't Know

A good cook? Certainly, but she couldn't have cooked the Indian Corn, rolled and toasted it to a crisp brown, wafer-thin flakes, as we do in preparing

Post Toasties

They are delicious with cream or milk, or sprinkled over fresh fruit or berries.

From the first cooking of the corn until the sealed, airtight packages of delicately toasted flakes are delivered to you, Post Toasties are never touched by human hand.

Grandmother would have liked

Post Toasties

—sold by Grocers.

ASTHMA

Asthma Sufferers Will Be Interested in the Following Unsolicited Testimonial in Regard to the Asthmetal Plate.

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Easton, Pa., April 23, 1914.

Asthmetal Co., 193 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y.

Gentlemen:—I enclose you post office money order for another Asthmetal Plate. I want this plate for an elderly woman friend of mine. I hope it will do as much good for her as the one I bought on January 22, 1914, for Harry Vogel. It was a god send to him, for he is entirely well, and has not spent a dollar since using your Asthmetal Plate and yet he suffered for twenty years with the dread disease.

Yours truly, C. W. MEEKER.

The Asthmetal Plate is now giving relief to hundreds of men and women who, like Mr. Vogel, have been chronic Asthma sufferers for years. Many of these people have spent hundreds of dollars in their quest for relief and they have been perfectly amazed by the great relief given them through wearing the Asthmetal Plate. We send it enclosed in a sanitary cloth envelope with strings attached. It is to be worn about the neck, plate resting over the bronchial tubes. It weighs less than three ounces. The Asthmetal draws out the asthmatic conditions and it assuredly gives great relief to every sufferer.

ASTHMETAL

We will send you the Asthmetal Plate, postage paid, on receipt of $2. Try it 30 days and if it fails to give relief send it back and we will cheerfully refund your money. , Address Asthmetal Co., Dept. B. W., 193 Main Street, Buffalo, N. Y.

To Women Who Dread Motherhood

Information How They May Give Birth to Happy, Healthy, Children Absolutely Without Fear of Pain—SENT FREE.

Don't dread the pains of childbirth. Dr. J. H. Dye devoted his life to relieving the sorrows of women. He has proven that the pain at childbirth need no longer be feared. Send your name and address to Dr. J. H. Dye Medical Institute, 130 Lewis Block, Buffalo, N. Y., and we will send you, postpaid, his wonderful book which tells how to give birth to happy, healthy children, absolutely without fear of pain, also how to become a mother. Do not delay but write TO-DAY.

FREE To every Boy and Girl. We give a fine Camera and complete outfit plates, chemicals etc., with full instructions. Just send your name and address, we send you 20 large art and religious pictures to sell at 10c each. When sold send $2.00 and the camera and outfit is yours We give 40 beautiful postcards extra for promptness; also a surprise gift extra for promptness.
People's Supply Co., Dept. B. W
716 Lucas Ave. St. Louis Mo

APPENDICITIS

If you have ever been threatened, or have ever had pains in the right side, our Liver-Gall Book, sent free upon request, may throw valuable light on this subject and give you the key to the cause & cure of your trouble. Add. Gallstone Remedy Co., Dept. 896, 219 S. Dearborn St., Chicago

Gallstones Bad Stomach

Biliousness, Constipation, Colic, Sick Headaches, Bowel Trouble, Gaseous Pains, Backache, Blues, Bad Color, are only a few of Gall-Trouble's many branches—rooted at the Liver. Gall-Tone, our home remedy (No Oil) cures Gall-Troubles at the source. Send for our Liver-Gall Treatment Book Free. Gallstone Remedy Co., Dept. 897, 219 S. Dearbprn St., Chicago

X-RAY KATHODOSCOPE. Latest curiosity. Everybody wants it; tells the time on watch through cloth. Apparently see best girl, fellow, objects through cloth, wood or stone, any distance, all climates; lasts lifetime; all ways ready for use. Price, 25c. Stamps or Silver. KATHOS CO., 141 E. 25th St., New York City.

YOUR HEART

Does it Flutter, Palpitate or Skip Beats? Have you Shortness of Breath, Tenderness, Numbness or Pain in left side, Dizziness, Fainting Spells, Spots before eyes, Sudden Starting in sleep, Nervousness, Nightmare, Hungry or Weak Spells, Oppressed Feeling in chest, Choking Sensation in throat, Painful to lie on left side, Cold Hands or Feet, Difficult Breathing, Heart Dropsy, Swelling of feet or ankles, or Neuralgia around heart? If you have one or more of the above symptoms, don't fail to use Dr. Kinsman's Guaranteed Heart Tablets. Not a secret medicine. It is said that one person out of every four has a weak heart. Three-fourths of these do not know it, and hundreds wrongfully treat themselves for the Stomach, Lungs, Kidneys or Nerves. Don't take any chances when Dr. Kinsman's Heart Tablets are within your reach. 1000 endorsements furnished.

FREE TREATMENT COUPON
Any sufferer mailing this coupon, with their name and P. O. Address, to Dr. F. G. Kinsman, Box 951, Augusta, Maine, will receive a box of Heart Tablets for trial by return mail, postpaid, free of charge. Delays are dangerous. Write at once—to-day.

never suffered the slightest qualms when many of his companions were groaning in their hammocks. On the second morning, however, when he attempted to turn out, he was completely overcome by those pangs which, while they last, make the dentist's chair seem, by comparison, a haven of refuge.

They say that the great Nelson himself could never put to sea at any time during his career without enduring agonies for the first two or three days. On the advice of Thompson, who quoted this example, Frank managed to go about his duties, instead of going on the sick list, and by the time the ship encountered the really rough waters off Cape Hatteras he had completely recovered.

It had been a blustering October day when the Albany sailed, but now the thermometer rose rapidly, and off the shore of South Carolina summer was regained. "Blues" were stowed away in bags and white uniforms worn. The possibility of hostilities was eagerly discussed, and the drills consisted mainly of practice loading with the dummy guns and Morris tube shooting.

Frank had long before made up his mind to qualify for the rating of gunner's mate. He knew that the fullest encouragement is given each man to follow his bent aboard a United States battleship. But the gun crews were all filled, and he was compelled to satisfy himself with eagerly watching the practice at the Morris tubes, small-caliber rifles attached above the guns and so contrived that, when the guns were theoretically fired, the rifle bullet was discharged at a mark en a piece of paper a short distance from the muzzle. And his duties on deck detail did not give him much opportunity to observe the gun practice. However, he consoled himself with the knowledge that his opportunity would come.

Shortly after four bells on the fifth morning after departure from New York every one was awakened by the clanging of the ship's bell and bugle calls. The division officers came hurrying through the ship.

"Fire on the berth deck forward!" was shouted.

Frank, startled from a sound sleep, was out of his hammock in an instant and hurried to his post, which was to close one of the hatches and help drag a tarpaulin over it. Hose was coupled to fire-plugs and manned, and in a half-minute after the alarm had been given, every one was at his place and waiting for the command to flood the forward part of the ship. An instant later the alarm for general quarters was sounded. Instantly the groups of men dissolved. Some removed the life rails and hoisted out the boats, others carried below everything inflammable, the entire deck was covered with an overhead net to catch splinters from shell-fire, and range-finders, gun crews, and those detailed to the magazines and electric hoists took their stations.

Five minutes later the men were in their hammocks again. Commander Merritt was well satisfied with the way they had responded to the summons and knew that his crew were on the way to being as efficient as any in the navy.

It was seven bells on the third morning following that a lookout sang down to the officer of the deck:

"Land ho!"

"Where away?" called the officer.

"Two points off the starboard bow, sir."

The Albany changed her course, and soon a low line of coast came into view on the horizon. At the same time a muttering, as of thunder, began to be audible.

It was not thunder, however, but the sound of gunfire, and every one was on the alert to catch its direction. Presently the sun cleared away the mists and the low, palm-fringed shore and the squat white houses of Asuncion came into view. Simultaneously the sound of firing grew more distinct, intermingled with the whining noise of shells. Within a few minutes the town became distinctly visible. It appeared deserted, and through their glasses the officers could see that the houses were barred and shuttered. But the American flag floated from the consulate roof, and presently a launch with the same emblem came tearing toward the Albany. At a distance of a knot the engines were stopped, the ship anchored, and the launch hove to and a messenger came aboard.

This highly interesting story will be continued in next week's Ledger. Do not miss reading it. A lot of great and timely stories will appear in the Ledger during the coming months. Send in your subscription and you will find yourself repaid ten times over.

* * *

The Roast.

"Hiram," said the wife of a countryman who had moved to the city, "I'll just bet the best cow we ever had that you've done went and forgot to bring a roast for dinner!"

"Hardly," mumbled Hiram, as he placed an armful of packages on the kitchen table. "In fact, I bought seven cents' worth of roast."

"Seven cents' worth! Hiram, be your mind failin' ye?"

"But I had to pay fifty cents for it," smiled Hiram.

The LEDGER'S EMBROIDERY CORNER.

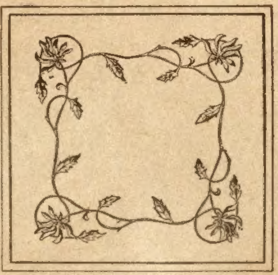
We call the attention of every woman to the beauty of the patterns displayed from week to week, and wish to impress upon each one the splendid quality of material that makes our offer a great bargain in every case. Every offer is complete. You can finish it up without buying anything extra.

These designs are already stamped on best quality cloth, and every set comes to you complete, exactly as described.

Every one of the designs we are going to offer is new and up-to-date, and nowhere else can you secure the same, as they are made exclusively for us.

You are sure to find many articles that you want if you watch the Ledger each week, and it is so easy to get them, every woman should have little trouble in getting almost every one.

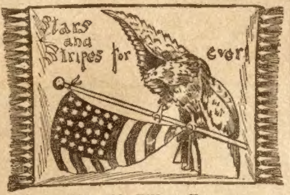
Canada—Single subscriptions, $1.50; Blade and Ledger, $3.00 the year.



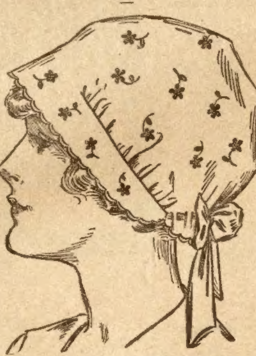
No. 128, Table Cover.

NO. 128, TABLE COVER.—This very simple table cover comes already hemstitched, stamped on pure imported tan linen with a beautiful design. When finished it will measure 34x34 inches. Enough embroidery floss to outline the design is included with this offer, which we are giving away free, postage prepaid, with a $2.00 year's subscription to the Blade and Ledger.

NO. 129, PILLOW TOP.—This beautiful pillow top will appear to every patriotic American. "Stars and Stripes Forever" is tinted on tan art ticking, 17x21 inches. Embroidery floss to outline the design and a back for the pillow are included. This will be given free with a $1.00 year's subscription to the Blade or Ledger.


Stars and Stripes for ever

No. 129, Pillow Top.



No. 130, Boudoir Cap.

NO. 130, BOUDOIR CAP.—This neat, tasteful boudoir cap design is for solid embroidery, and is one of the latest styles. This design is stamped on fine white lawn, linen finished, and we will include enough colored embroidery floss to work the design. This will be sent to any one sending us $1.00 for a year's subscription to the Blade or Ledger.

* * *

Got a Job.

Underdone Cutlets, proprietor of the Speedy cafe, was notoriously hard-hearted. The most weeping widow who ever graced a melodrama couldn't have wept a slice of stale bread out of his restaurant without the price. So, when a pale and timorous bum approached the desk and made a faltering appeal, it was no surprise to the lunch fiends to hear a curt, "Nothing doing. Beat it!"

"I'm not a beggar," retorted the hungry man, "I'm willing to scrub floors or wash dishes. I'm just out of prison, and nobody will give me work. I'm starving."

The proprietor betrayed a faint interest.

"I'll tell you the truth," explained the ex-convict. "I was a kind of a counterfeiter. I used to take a hundred-dollar bill and split it in two with a razor. Then I'd take a one and split that, and then paste the halves together, so I'd have two centuries, if the sucker didn't look on both sides. It took 'em five years to catch me."

Mr. Cutlets beckoned the ex-prisoner behind the bar.

"Order what you like on the house," he whispered. "I've got a steady job for you. I'll give you thirty dollars a week to slice ham for my sandwiches."

* * *

Bobby's Choice.

It was story-telling time in the first grade. The teacher had taken her place in front of the class and asked: "What would you like to hear today?" A little hand shot up in the back of the room.

"Well, Bobby, what story do you want?"

"Please, ma'am, tell us about the little boy who swallowed the piece of ribbon and it made him sick at his stomach."

The teacher looked mystified. "Bobby, I never heard of that story. We had better take something else." But Bobby was not so easily downed.

"Oh, yes, you have, teacher. You know it says:

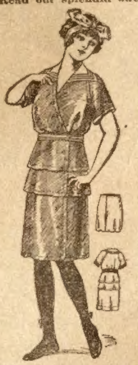
"'He ran to the window as quick as a
flash,
"'Flung open the shutters and threw up
the sash.'"

PATTERN COUPONS FREE!

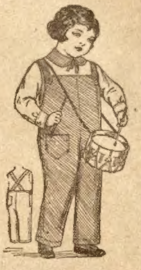
Hundreds of Patterns to Select From

The great difficulty in making one's own garments is to get suitable patterns. Our women readers could make many pretty and useful things for themselves and their children if they could get well-made patterns. We have arranged to give our readers a pattern service unexcelled.

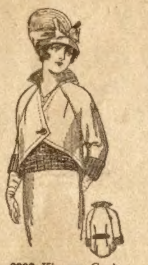
We make a splendid offer of the best and most fashionable patterns that can be produced by the greatest designers of New York and Paris, and what is more, these patterns will be within the reach of every one, and every one will have a wide selection to choose from. **Read our splendid offer below.**



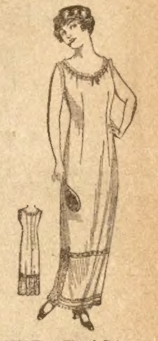
8254 Bathing Suit, 34 to 42 bust.



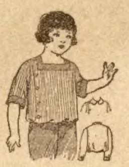
8138 Boy's Overalls, 4 to 8 years.



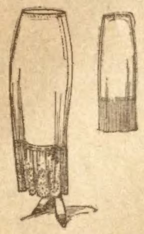
8293 Kimono Coat, 34 to 42 bust.



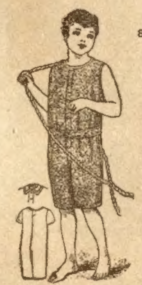
8282 Dart-Fitted Princesse Slip, 34 to 42 bust.



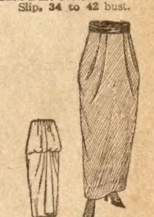
8283 Boy's Blouse, 4 to 8 years.



8253 Two-Piece Petticoat for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.



8227 Boy's Bathing Suit, 4 to 12 years.



8284 One-Piece Skirt for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.

HOW TO GET THE FREE PATTERNS

Here is the way we will do it. To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of the Chicago Ledger. When you see a pattern that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

These patterns are the best that can be made. Each pattern gives full directions for the cutting and making with information as to the amount of cloth required, etc., so that any one can make any of the designs illustrated with no trouble at all. At the same time, they are so stylish and accurately cut that dressmakers and seamstresses all over the country will be quick to take advantage of this liberal offer. Some will subscribe for two years so they can get ten coupons. These designs are made by the best designers and modists of New York and Paris, and are up-to-the-minute in fashion and beauty.

We treat old and new customers alike on this splendid offer. If you are already a subscriber, send in a dollar and we will send you the five pattern coupons and extend your subscription one year from the time it now expires.

To get these five coupons entitling you to five patterns, fill out the blank below and enclose it with one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. Do this now—today! No woman should be without the Ledger's Pattern Coupon Book. Be among the thousands of women who will get these coupons.

.... CUT THIS OUT AND SEND TO US ....

THE CHICAGO LEDGER, 500 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

Enclosed please find one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. This entitles me to Five Pattern Coupons. **Canada Subscription Price $1.50 per year.**

NAME ....
Street No.
or R. F. D. ....

Box .... Town ....

This is a .... Subscription, State ....
(New or Renewal)

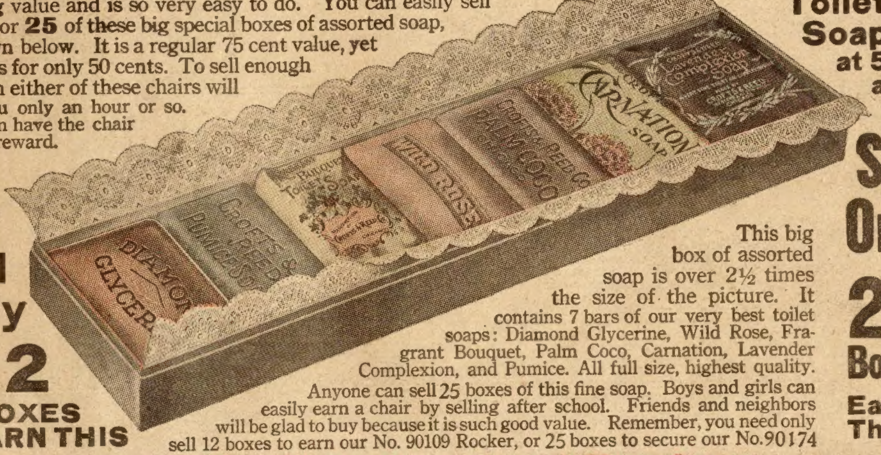
If you wish any pattern from those advertised in this issue, mark the number and size on the margin and we will retain a coupon for each pattern we send you when we send you the Coupon Book. (Order by size and number.) **Coupons good for six months.**

Earn a Rocker-Easy

We Give You Either of These Big Rockers

For Selling a Few of Our 7-Bar Boxes of Fine Assorted Toilet Soaps at 50c a Box

We want every one to take advantage of this offer, because it is big value and is so very easy to do. You can easily sell **12** or **25** of these big special boxes of assorted soap, shown below. It is a regular 75 cent value, yet it sells for only 50 cents. To sell enough to earn either of these chairs will take you only an hour or so. You then have the chair as your reward.



You Sell It For 50c a Box

Sell Only 12 BOXES EARN THIS

Sell Only 25 Boxes Earn This

This big box of assorted soap is over 2½ times the size of the picture. It contains 7 bars of our very best toilet soaps: Diamond Glycerine, Wild Rose, Fragrant Bouquet, Palm Coco, Carnation, Lavender Complexion, and Pumice. All full size, highest quality. Anyone can sell 25 boxes of this fine soap. Boys and girls can easily earn a chair by selling after school. Friends and neighbors will be glad to buy because it is such good value. Remember, you need only sell 12 boxes to earn our No. 90109 Rocker, or 25 boxes to secure our No. 90174

We Ship Soap and Rocker on Credit and Give You 30 Days to Pay

We want to send you the soap and the chair you pick out, all on 30 days' credit. Don't send any money with your order, unless you prefer to do so. Just fill out the coupon below the chair you want, writing your name and address carefully, and giving the names and address of a couple of business men who know you. We will at once send you your chair and the soap you are to sell. You can pay us when the soap is sold. We allow 30 days in which to dispose of soap. It should take only 30 minutes.

Remember, you cannot possibly lose, and you run no risk, because we agree to take every thing back at our expense if you are not perfectly satisfied with everything. Think of getting a fine rocker on these terms! No deposit, no cash in advance, nothing to do but sell 12 or 25 quick selling novelty boxes of soap that every body wants the minute they see it. We wish you could see the two fine chairs we give with this offer. They are beauties,—big, massive and comfortable.

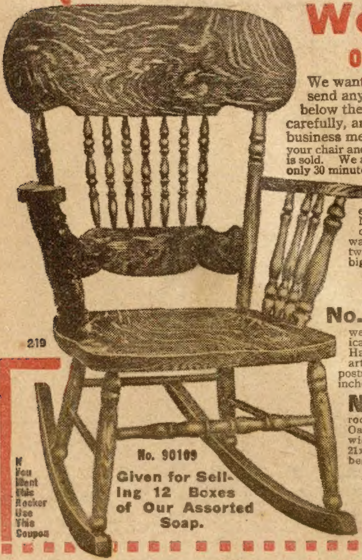
> "I received the Rocker and Soap and am very well pleased with both. I am sending you the money and wish you would send me your large catalog, as I would like to get more orders."
>
> Mrs. Wm. Lemmon,
> R. No. 6, Bellevue, Ohio.

Read These Descriptions

No. 90109 **Given for selling 12 boxes of assorted Soap.** A fine hardwood rocker, well made and very strong. Finished in best kind of American Quartered Oak known to furniture manufacturing. Has 7 spindles in back, 3 under each arm. Back panels are artistically shaped. Has saddle seat, turned front and back posts. Height over 38 inches, width 24 inches. Seat is 15 inches from floor. A fine chair in every sense of the word.

No. 90174 **Given for selling 25 boxes of assorted Soap.** Our biggest rocker value. Easily worth $12.50 at retail. Frame of solid Oak, Golden Oak finish; front posts and arms 4 inches wide; 8¼-inch square fillers under arms; seat measures 21x20 inches; spring construction. Rocker upholstered in best black imitation leather; back 27 inches high from seat.

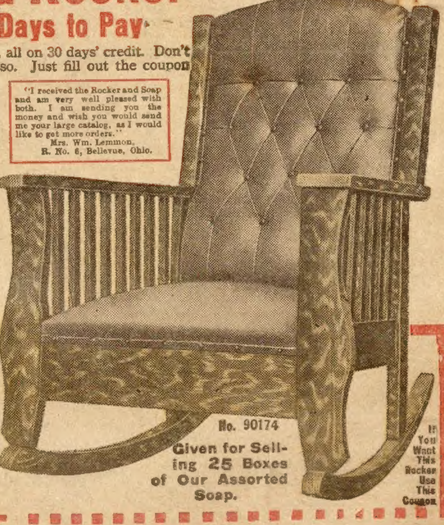
We send you the chair and the soap. You sell the soap for 50 cents per box. The chair then is yours, FREE.



No. 90109

Given for Selling 12 Boxes of Our Assorted Soap.

If You Want This Rocker Use This Coupon



No. 90174

Given for Selling 25 Boxes of Our Assorted Soap.

If You Want This Rocker Use This Coupon

CROFTS & REED CO., Dept. A402

Please ship to me at address below, 12 BOXES of your assorted soap to sell, and one of your No. 90109 Rockers as my reward for the work. I agree to remit $6.00 in full payment, within 30 days.

MY NAME..

ADDRESS...

TOWN..............................STATE...........................

Reference No. 1..............................Business......................

Reference No. 2..............................Business......................

IMPORTANT

Fill out coupon for rocker you want, clip and mail today to

CROFTS & REED CO.
Dept. A402 CHICAGO, ILL.

CROFTS & REED CO., Dept. A402

Please ship to me at address below, 25 BOXES of your assorted soap to sell, and one of your No. 90174 Rockers as my reward for the work. I agree to remit $12.50 in full payment, within 30 days.

MY NAME..

ADDRESS...

TOWN..............................STATE...........................

Reference No. 1..............................Business......................

Reference No. 2..............................Business......................

FREE! A POUND BOX OF CHOCOLATE CANDY (Value 70 Cents) WILL BE INCLUDED IF CASH ACCOMPANIES EITHER OF ABOVE ORDERS **FREE!**